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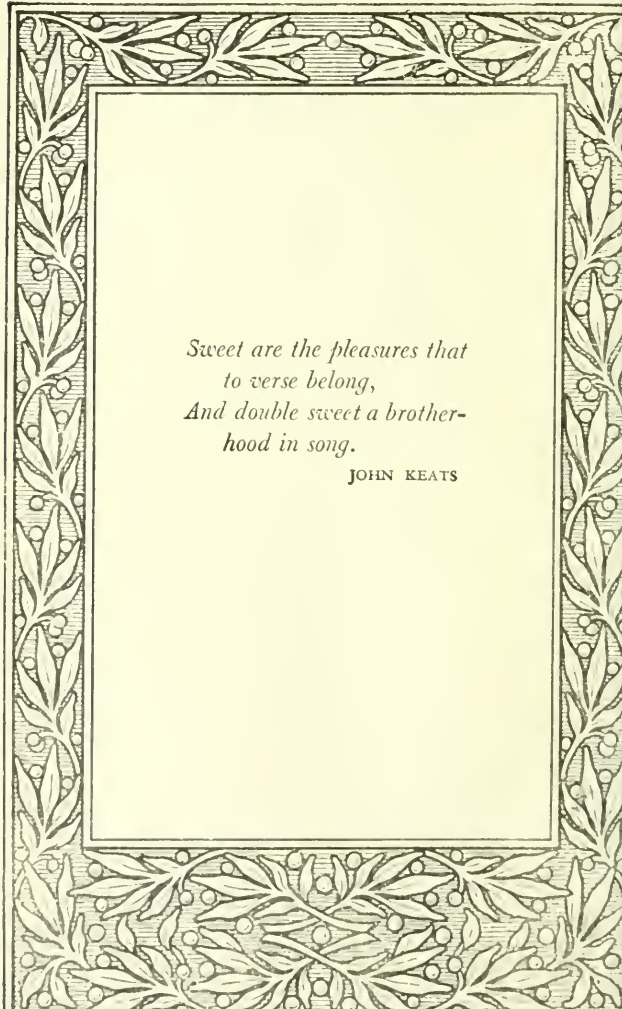


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THE LAUREL AND GOLD SERIES

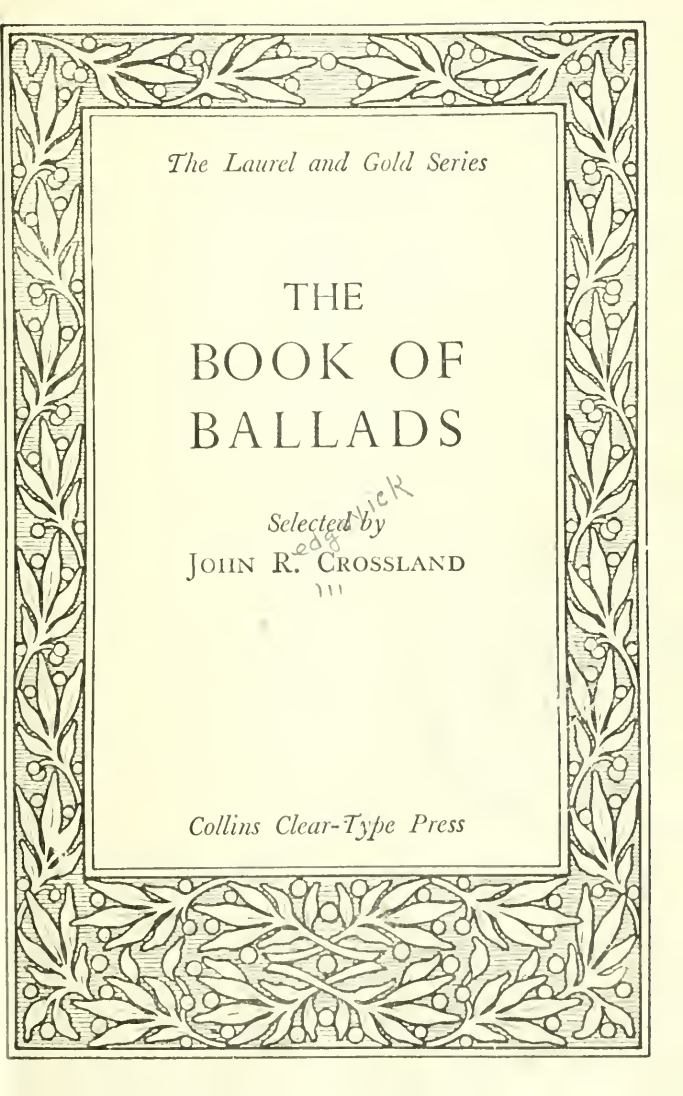
General Editor: John R. Crossland

VOLUME 87

A decorative border of laurel leaves and berries surrounds the central text. The border is composed of a repeating pattern of stylized leaves and small circular berries, creating a frame around the poem.

*Sweet are the pleasures that
to verse belong,
And double sweet a brother-
hood in song.*

JOHN KEATS



The Laurel and Gold Series

THE
BOOK OF
BALLADS

Selected by
JOHN R. CROSSLAND

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A FROG HE WOULD A-WOOING GO

A Frog he would a-wooing go,
Heigho, says Rowley,
Whether his mother would let him or no.
With a rowley powley, gammon, and spinach,
Heigho, says Anthony Rowley!

So off he sets with his opera hat,
Heigho, says Rowley,
And on the road he met with a rat,
With a rowley powley, gammon and spinach,
Heigho, says Anthony Rowley!

"Pray, Mr. Rat, will you go with me,
Heigho, says Rowley,
"Kind Mrs. Mousey for to see?"
With a rowley powley, gammon, and spinach,
Heigho, says Anthony Rowley!

When they came to the door of Mousey's hall,
Heigho, says Rowley,
They gave a loud knock, and they gave a loud call.
With a rowley powley, gammon, and spinach,
Heigho, says Anthony Rowley!

"Pray, Mrs. Mouse, are you within?"
Heigho, says Rowley,
"Oh, yes, kind sirs, I'm sitting to spin."
With a rowley powley, gammon, and spinach,
Heigho, says Anthony Rowley!

"Pray, Mrs. Mouse, will you give us some beer?
Heigho, says Rowley,
For Froggy and I are fond of good cheer."
With a rowley powley, gammon, and spinach,
Heigho, says Anthony Rowley!

"Pray, Mr. Frog, will you give us a song?
Heigho, says Rowley,
But let it be something that's not very long."
With a rowley powley, gammon, and spinach,
Heigho, says Anthony Rowley!

"Indeed, Mrs. Mouse," replied the Frog,
Heigho, says Rowley,
"A cold has made me as hoarse as a dog."
With a rowley powley, gammon, and spinach,
Heigho, says Anthony Rowley!

"Since you have caught cold, Mr. Frog," Mousey
said,
Heigho, says Rowley,
"I'll sing you a song that I have just made."
With a rowley powley, gammon, and spinach,
Heigho, says Anthony Rowley!

But while they were all a merry-making,
Heigho, says Rowley,
A cat and her kittens came tumbling in.
With a rowley powley, gammon, and spinach,
Heigho, says Anthony Rowley!

The cat she seized the rat by the crown;
Heigho, says Rowley,

The kittens they pulled the little mouse down.
With a rowley powley, gammon, and spinach,
Heigho, says Anthony Rowley!

This put Mr. Frog in a terrible fright,
Heigho, says Rowley,
He took up his hat, and he wished them good-
night,
With a rowley powley, gammon, and spinach,
Heigho, says Anthony Rowley!

But as Froggy was crossing over a brook,
Heigho, says Rowley,
A lily-white duck came and gobbled him up.
With a rowley powley, gammon, and spinach,
Heigho, says Anthony Rowley!

So there was an end of one, two, and three,
Heigho, says Rowley,
The Rat, the Mouse, and the little Froggee!
With a rowley powley, gammon, and spinach,
Heigho, says Anthony Rowley!

ANON.

THE FOX AND THE FARMER

A Fox jumped up on a moonlight night,
The stars were shining, and all things bright;
"Oh, oh!" said the Fox, "it's a very fine night
For me to go through the town, heigho!"

The Fox when he came to yonder stile,
He lifted his ears, and he listened a while;
"Oh, oh!" said the Fox, "it's but a short mile
From this unto yonder town, heigho!"

The Fox when he came to the farmer's gate,
Whom should he see but the farmer's Drake;
"I love you well for your master's sake,
And long to be picking your bones, heigho!"

The grey Goose ran right round the haystack.
"Oh, ho!" said the Fox, "you are very fat;
You'll do very well to ride on my back,
From this unto yonder town, heigho!"

The farmer's wife she jumped out of bed,
And out of the window she popped her head;
"Oh, husband! oh, husband! the geese are all dead,
For the Fox has been through the town, heigho!"

The farmer he loaded his pistol with lead,
And shot the old rogue of a fox through the head;
"Ah, ah!" said the farmer, "I think you're quite dead,
And no more you'll trouble the town, heigho!"

TRADITIONAL.

TRUE THOMAS

True Thomas lay on yon grassy bank,
And he beheld a lady gay,
A lady that was blithe and bold,
Come riding o'er the ferny brae.

Her skirt was of the grass-green silk,
Her mantle was of the velvet fine,
At each lock of her horse's mane
Hung fifty silver bells and nine.

True Thomas he took off his hat,
And bowed him low down to his knee;
"All hail, thou mighty Queen of Heaven!
For thy like on earth I ne'er did see."

"Oh no, oh no, True Thomas," she says,
"That name does not belong to me;
I am but the Queen of fair Elfland,
And I'm come here to visit thee.

"But ye must go with me, Thomas,
True Thomas, ye must go with me;
For ye must serve me seven years,
Through weal or woe, as chance may be."

She turned about her milk-white steed,
And took True Thomas up behind;
And aye whene'er her bridle rang,
The steed flew swifter than the wind.

For forty days and forty nights
He rode through bracken to the knee;
And he saw neither sun nor moon,
But heard the roaring of the sea.

“Oh see ye not that bonny road,
Which winds about the ferny brake?
That is the road to fair Elfland,
Which thou and I this night must take.

“But Thomas, you must hold your tongue,
Whatever ye may hear or see,
For if one word ye should chance to speak,
Ye’ll ne’er get back to your own country.”

He has gotten a coat of the elfin cloth,
And a pair of shoes of velvet green;
And till seven years were past and gone
True Thomas on earth was never seen.

OLD BALLAD.

ROBIN GOODFELLOW

From Oberon, in fairy land,
The king of ghosts and shadows there,
Mad Robin I, at his command,
Am sent to view the night-sports here.
What revel rout
Is kept about
In every corner where I go.
I will o'ersee
And merry be,
And make good sport, with ho, ho, ho!

More swiftly than lightning can I fly
About this aery welkin soon,
And, in a minute's space descry
Each thing that's done below the moon.
There's not a hag,
Or ghost shall wag,
Or cry, ware Goblins! where I go;
But Robin I,
Their feats will spy,
And send them home, with ho, ho, ho!

Whene'er such wanderers I meet,
As from their night-sports they trudge home;
With counterfeiting voice I greet
And call them on, with me to roam
Thro' woods, thro' lakes,
Thro' bogs, through brakes;

Or else, unseen, with them I go,
 And in the nick
 To play some trick,
And frolick it, with ho, ho, ho!

Sometimes I meet them like a man;
 Sometimes an ox, sometimes a hound;
And to a horse I turn me can;
 To trip and trot about them round.
 But if, to ride,
 My back they stride,
More swift than wind away I go,
 O'er hedge and lands
 Thro' pools and ponds
I whirry, laughing, ho, ho, ho!

When lads and lasses merry be,
 With possets and with junkets fine;
Unseen of all the company,
 I eat their cakes, and sip their wine;
 And, to make sport,
 I laugh and snort;
And out the candles I do blow:
 The maids I kiss;
 They shriek—Who's this?
I answer nought, but ho, ho, ho!

Yet now and then the maids to please,
 At midnight I card up their wool;
And while they sleep, and take their ease,
 With wheel to threads their flax I pull.
 I grind at mill,
 Their malt up still;

I dress their hemp, I spin their tow.
If any 'wake,
And would me take,
I wend me, laughing, ho, ho, ho!

When any need to borrow ought,
We lend them what they do require:
And for the use demand we nought;
Our own is all we do desire.
If to repay,
They do delay,
Abroad amongst them then I go,
And night by night,
I them affright,
With pinchings, dreams, and ho, ho, ho!

When men do traps and engines set
In loop-holes where the vermin creep,
Who from their folds and houses get
Their ducks and geese, and lambs and sheep:
I spy the gin,
And enter in,
And seem a vermin taken so;
But when they there
Approach me near,
I leap out laughing, ho, ho, ho!

By wells and rills, in meadows green,
We nightly dance our hey-day guise;
And to our fairy king and queen
We chant our moonlight minstrelsies.
When larks 'gin sing,
Away we fling;

And babes new born steal as we go,
And elf in bed
We leave instead,
And wend us laughing, ho, ho, ho!

From hag-bred Merlin's time have I
Thus nightly revell'd to and fro:
And for my pranks men call me by
The name of Robin Goodfellow.
Fiends, ghosts, and sprites,
Who haunt the nights,
The hags and goblins do me know;
And beldames old
My feats have told;
So *Vale, Vale*; ho, ho, ho!

ANON.

SADDLE TO RAGS

This story I'm going to sing,
I hope it will give you content,
Concerning a silly old man
That was going to pay his rent.

As he was a-riding along,
Along all on the highway,
A gentleman-thief overtook him,
And thus unto him did say.

"O well overtaken, old man,
O well overtaken," said he;
"Thank you kindly, sir," says the old man,
"If you be for my companie."

"How far are you going this way?"
It made the old man to smile;
"To tell you the truth, kind sir,
I'm just a-going twa mile.

"I am but a silly old man,
Who farms a piece of ground;
My half-year rent, kind sir,
Just comes to forty pound.

"But my landlord's not been at hame,—
I've not seen him twelve month or more;
It makes my rent to be large,
I've just to pay him fourscore."

“You should not have told anybody,
For thieves there are ganging many;
If they were to light upon you,
They would rob you of every penny.”

“O never mind,” says the old man,
“Thieves I fear on no side;
My money is safe in my bags,
In the saddle on which I ride.”

As they were a-riding along,
And riding a-down a ghyll,
The thief pulled out a pistòl,
And bade the old man stand still.

The old man was crafty and false,
As in this world are many;
He flung his old saddle o’er t’hedge,
And said, “Fetch it, if thou’lt have any.”

This thief got off his horse,
With courage stout and bold,
To search this old man’s bags,
And gave him his horse to hold.

The old man put foot in stirrup,
And he got on astride,
He set the thief’s horse in a gallop,—
You need not bid th’ old man ride!

“O stay! O stay!” says the thief,
“And thou half my share shalt have:”
“Nay, marry, not I,” quoth the old man,
“For once I’ve bitten a knave!”

This thief he was not content;
He thought these must be bags;
So he up with his rusty sword,
And chopped the old saddle to rags.

The old man gallop'd and rode
Until he was almost spent,
Till he came to his landlord's house,
And paid him his whole year's rent.

He opened this rogue's portmanteau;
It was glorious for to behold;
There was five hundred pound in money,
And other five hundred in gold.

His landlord it made him to stare,
When he did the sight behold;
"Where did thou get the white money,
And where get the yellow gold?"

"I met a fond fool by the way,
I swapp'd horses, and gave him no boot;
But never mind," says the old man,
"I got a fond fool by the root."

"But now you're grown cramped and old,
Nor fit for to travel about;"
"O never mind," says the old man,
"I can give these old bones a root!"

As he was a-riding hame,
And a-down a narrow lane,
He spied his mare tied to a tree,
And said, "Tib, thou'lt now gae hame "

And when that he got hame,
And told his old wife what he'd done,
She rose and she donned her clothes,
And about the house did run.

She sung, and she danced, and sung,
And she sung with a merry devotion,
"If ever our daughter gets wed,
It will help to enlarge her portion!"

ANON.

MARY AMBREE

When captains courageous, whom death could not
daunt,
Did march to the siege of the city of Gaunt,
They mustered their soldiers by two and by three,
And the foremost in battle was Mary Ambree.

When brave Sir John Major was slain in her sight,
Who was her true lover, her joy, and delight,
Because he was slain most treacherously,
Then vowed to revenge him Mary Ambree.

She clothèd herself from the top to the toe
In buff of the bravest, most seemly to show;
A fair shirt of mail then slippèd on she:
Was not this a brave bonny lass, Mary Ambree?

A helmet of proof she straight did provide,
A strong arming sword she girt by her side,
On her hand a goodly fair gauntlet put she:
Was not this a brave bonny lass, Mary Ambree?

Then she took her sword and her target in hand,
Bidding all such as would be of her band;
To wait on her person came thousand and three:
Was not this a brave bonny lass, Mary Ambree?

“My soldiers,” she saith, “so valiant and bold,
Now follow your captain, whom you do behold;
Still foremost in battle myself will I be:”
Was not this a brave bonny lass, Mary Ambree?

Then cried out her soldiers, and loud they did say,
"So well thou becomest this gallant array,
Thy heart and thy weapons so well do agree,
There was none ever like Mary Ambree."

She cheerèd her soldiers, that fought for life,
With ancient and standard, with drum and with fife,
With brave clanging trumpets that sounded so free:
Was not this a brave bonny lass, Mary Ambree?

"Before I will see the worst of you all
To come into danger of death or of thrall,
This hand and this life I will venture so free!"
Was not this a brave bonny lass, Mary Ambree?

She led up her soldiers in battle array,
'Gainst three times their numbers, by break of the day;
Seven hours in skirmish continuèd she:
Was not this a brave bonny lass, Mary Ambree?

She fillèd the skies with the smoke of her shot,
And her enemies' bodies with bullets so hot;
For one of her own men a score killèd she:
Was not this a brave bonny lass, Mary Ambree?

And when her false gunner, to spoil her intent,
Away all her pellets and powder had sent,
Straight with her keen weapon she slashed him in
three:

Was not this a brave bonny lass, Mary Ambree?

Being falsely betrayèd for lucre of hire,
At length she was forcèd to make a retire;
Then her soldiers into a strong castle drew she:
Was not this a brave bonny lass, Mary Ambree?

Her foes they beset her on every side,
As thinking close siege she could never abide;
To beat down the walls they all did decree,
But stoutly defied them brave Mary Ambree.

Then took she her sword and her target in hand,
And mounting the walls all undaunted did stand,
There daring their captains to match any three:
Oh what a brave captain was Mary Ambree!

“Now say, English captain, what wouldest thou give
To ransom thyself, which else must not live?
Come, yield thyself quickly, or slain thou must be.”
Then smiled sweetly brave Mary Ambree.

“Ye captains courageous, of valour so bold,
Whom think you before you now you do behold?”—
“A knight, sir, of England, and captain so free,
Who shortly with us must a prisoner be.”—

“No captain of England, behold in your sight
The locks of a woman, and therefore no knight.
No knight, sirs, of England, nor captain you see,
But a poor simple lass callèd Mary Ambree.”—

“But art thou a woman, as thou dost declare,
Whose valour hath proved so undaunted in war?
If England doth yield such brave lasses as thee,
Full well may they conquer, fair Mary Ambree.”

The Prince of Great Parma heard of her renown,
Who long had advanced for England's fair crown;
He wooed her and sued her his mistress to be,
And offered rich presents to Mary Ambree.

But to her own country she back did return,
Still holding the foes of fair England in scorn;
Therefore, English captains of every degree,
Sing forth the brave valours of Mary Ambree.

OLD BALLAD.

OLD SIR WALTER

Stout Sir Walter was old but hearty:
A velvet cap on his long grey hair,
A full white rose at his gold-laced button:
Many were laughing, but none looked gayer.

Such a beast was his jet black hunter,
Silver-spotted with foam and froth,
Brawny in flank and fiery-blooded,
Stung by the spur to a curbless wrath!

Gaily blowing his horn, he scrambled
Over the stone wall four feet two;
See-saw over the old park railing,
Shaking the thistle-head rich with dew.

A long black face the sour Whig huntsman
Pulled, when he saw Sir Walter come
Trotting up gay by the oak wood cover,
Why when he cheered did they all sit dumb?

Why when he flung up his hat and shouted,
"God save King George!" they bawling cried,
As a Justice, drawing a long-sealed parchment,
Rode up grim to Sir Walter's side.

"In King George's name, arrest him, lieges!
This is the villain who fought at Boyne:
He sliced the feather from off my beaver,
And ran his sword twice into my groin."

Then out whipp'd blades: the horns they sounded,
The field came flocking in thick and fast,
But Sir Walter flogged at the barking rabble,
And through them all like a whirlwind passed.

"A hundred guineas to seize the traitor!"
Cried the Justice, purple and white with rage,
Then such a spurring, whipping, and flogging,
Was never seen in the strangest age.

The hunter whipped off Spot and Fowler,
Viper and Fury, and all the pack,
And set them fast, with their red tongues lolling
And white teeth fix'd, on Sir Walter's track.

Loud on the wind came blast of bugle,
All together the hounds gave tongue,
They swept like a hail-storm down by the gibbet,
Where the black rags still in the cold storm
hung.

The rain cut faces like long whip lashes,
The wind blew strong in its wayward will,
And powdering fast, the men and horses
Thundering swept down Frampton Hill.

There half the grooms at last pull'd bridle,
Swearing 'twould ruin their bits of blood;
Three Whig rogues flew out of the saddle,
And two were plumped in the river mud.

Three men stuck to the leading rebel;
The first was a Whig lord, fat and red,
The next a yellow-faced lean attorney,
And the last a Justice, as someone said.

Slap at the fence went old Sir Walter,
Slap at the ditch by the pollard-tree,
Crash through the hazels, over the water,
And wherever he went, there went the three.

Into the hill-fence broke Sir Walter,
Right through the tangle of branch and thorn,
Swish'd the rasper up by the windmill.
In spite of the cries and blowing of horns.

Lines of flame trailed all the scarlet
Streaming, the dogs half a mile before,
Whoop! with a cry all after Sir Walter,
Driving wildly along the shore.

Over the timber flew old Sir Walter,
Light as a swallow, sure and swift,
For his sturdy arm and his "pull and hustle"
Could help a nag at the deadest lift.

Off went his gold-laced hat and bugle,
His scarlet coat he then let fall,
And into the river spurr'd old Sir Walter,
Boldly there, in the sight of all.

There was many a sore on back and wither,
Many a spur that ran with red,
But none of them caught the stout Sir Walter,
Though they counted of horses sixty head.

There was many a fetlock cut and wounded,
Many a hock deep lam'd with thorns,
Many a man that two years after
Shuddered to hear the sound of horns.

But on the fallow, the long clay fallow,
Foundered his black mare, Lilly Lee,
And Sir Walter sat on the tough old saddle,
Waiting the coming of all the three.

Never such chase of stag or vermin,
Along the park pale, in and out;
On they thundered, fast over the railing,
Driving the fence in splints about.

The first he shot with his long steel pistol,
The second he slew with his Irish sword,
The third he threw in the brook, and mounted
Quick on the steed of the fat Whig lord.

Then off to the ship at the nearest harbour,
Galloped Sir Walter, sure and fleet.
He died, 'tis true, in an old French garret,
But his heart went true to the latest beat.

A white rose, stifled and very sickly,
Pined for air at the window-sill,
But the last fond look of the brave old trooper
Was fixed on the dying emblem—still,

All alone in the dusky garret,
He turn'd to the flower with a father's pride,
“God save King James!” the old man murmured,
“God—save—the—King!” he moaned and died.

G. W. THORNBURY.

THE ABBOT OF INISFALEN

I

The Abbot of Inisfalen
Awoke ere dawn of day;
Under the dewy green leaves
Went he forth to pray.

The lake around his island
Lay smooth and dark and deep,
And, wrapped in a misty stillness,
The mountains were all asleep.

Low kneeled the Abbot Cormac,
When the dawn was dim and grey;
The prayers of his holy office
He faithfully 'gan say.

Low kneeled the Abbot Cormac,
When the dawn was waxing red,
And for his sins' forgiveness
A solemn prayer he said.

Low kneeled that holy Abbot
When the dawn was waxing clear;
And he prayed with loving-kindness
For his convent brethren dear.

Low kneeled that blessed Abbot,
When the dawn was waxing bright;
He prayed a great prayer for Ireland,
He prayed with all his might.

Low kneeled that good old father,
While the sun began to dart;
He prayed a prayer for all mankind,
He prayed it from his heart.

II

The Abbot of Inisfalen
Arose upon his feet;
He heard a small bird singing,
And, oh, but it sung sweet!

He heard a white bird singing well
Within a holly-tree;
A song so sweet and happy
Never before heard he.

It sung upon a hazel,
It sung upon a thorn;
He had never heard such music
Since the hour that he was born.

It sung upon a sycamore,
It sung upon a briar;
To follow the song and hearken
This Abbot could never tire.

Till at last he well bethought him
He might no longer stay;
So he blessed the little white singing-bird,
And gladly went his way.

III

But when he came to his Abbey walls,
He found a wondrous change;
He saw no friendly faces there,
For every face was strange.

The stranger spoke unto him;
And he heard from all and each
The foreign tone of the Sassenach,
Not wholesome Irish speech.

Then the oldest monk came forward,
In Irish tongue spake he:
"Thou wearest the holy Augustine's dress,
And who hath given it thee?"

"I wear the holy Augustine's dress,
And Cormac is my name,
The Abbot of this good Abbey
By grace of God I am.

"I went forth to pray at the dawn of day;
And when my prayers were said,
I hearkened awhile to a little bird
That sung above my head."

The monks to him made answer,
"Two hundred years have gone o'er,
Since our Abbot Cormac went through the gate,
And never was heard of more.

"Matthias now is our Abbot,
And twenty have passed away.
The stranger is lord of Ireland;
We live in an evil day."

IV

“Now give me absolution;
For my time is come,” said he.
And they gave him absolution
As speedily as might be.

Then, close outside the window,
The sweetest song they heard
That ever yet since the world began
Was uttered by any bird.

The monks looked out and saw the bird,
Its feathers all white and clean;
And there in a moment, beside it,
Another white bird was seen.

Those two they sang together,
Waved their white wings, and fled;
Flew aloft, and vanished;
But the good old man was dead.

They buried his blessed body
Where lake and greensward meet;
A carven cross above his head,
A holly-bush at his feet.

Where spreads the beautiful water
To gay or cloudy skies,
And the purple peaks of Killarney
From ancient woods arise.

WILLIAM ALLINGHAM.

THE OLD SCOTTISH CAVALIER

Come listen to another song,
Should make your heart beat high,
Bring crimson to your forehead,
And the lustre to your eye:—
It is the song of the olden time,
Of days long since gone by,
And of a Baron stout and bold
As e'er wore sword on thigh!
Like a brave old Scottish cavalier,
All of the olden time!

He kept his castle in the north,
Hard by the thundering Spey;
And a thousand vassals dwelt around,
All of his kindred they.
And not a man of all that clan
Had ever ceased to pray
For the Royal race they loved so well,
Though exiled far away
From the steadfast Scottish cavaliers,
All of the olden time!

His father drew the righteous sword
For Scotland and her claims,
Among the loyal gentlemen
And chiefs of ancient names.
Who swore to fight or fall beneath
The standard of King James,
And died at Killiecrankie Pass
With the glory of the Graemes;
Like a true old Scottish cavalier
All of the olden time!

He never owned the foreign rule,
No master he obeyed,
But kept his clan in peace at home,
From foray and from raid;
And when they asked him for his oath,
He touched his glittering blade,
And pointed to his bonnet blue,
That bore the white cockade:
Like a leal old Scottish cavalier,
All of the olden time!

At length the news ran through the land—
THE PRINCE had come again!
That night the fiery cross was sped
O'er mountain and through glen;
And our old Baron rose in might,
Like a lion from his den,
And rode away across the hills
To Charlie and his men,
With the valiant Scottish cavaliers,
All of the olden time!

He was the first that bent the knee
When the STANDARD waved abroad,
He was the first that charged the foe,
On Preston's bloody sod;
And ever, in the van of fight,
The foremost still he trod,
Until on bleak Culloden's heath,
He gave his soul to God,
Like a good old Scottish cavalier,
All of the olden time!

Oh, never shall we know again
A heart so stout and true—
The olden times have passed away,
And weary are the new:
The fair White Rose has faded
From the garden where it grew,
And no fond tears, save those of heaven,
The glorious bed bedew
Of the last old Scottish cavalier
All of the olden time!

WILLIAM EDMONDSTOUNE AYTON.

KING HAL AND THE COBBLER

King Hal was a-hunting the swift fallow-deer,
He dropped all his nobles; and when he got clear,
In hope of some pastime away he did ride,
Till he came to an alehouse, hard by a wood-side.

And there with a cobbler he happened to meet,
And him in kind sort he so freely did greet:
“Pray thee, good fellow, what hast in thy jug,
Which under thy arm thou dost lovingly hug?”

“By the mass!” quoth the cobbler, “it’s nappy brown
ale,
And for to drink to thee, friend, I will not fail;
For although thy jacket looks gallant and fine,
I think that my twopence as good is as thine.”

“By my soul! honest fellow, the truth thou hast
spoke,”
And straight he sat down with the cobbler to joke;
They drank to the King, and they pledged to each
other;
Who’d seen ’em had thought they were brother and
brother.

As they were a-drinking the king pleased to say,
“What news, honest fellow! come tell me, I pray?”
“There’s nothing of news, beyond that I hear
The King’s on the border a-chasing the deer.

“And truly I wish I so happy may be
Whilst he is a-hunting the King I might see;
For although I’ve travelled the land many ways,
I never have yet seen a King in my days.”

The King, with a hearty brisk laughter, replied,
“I tell thee, good fellow, if thou canst but ride,
Thou shalt get up behind me, and I will thee bring
To the presence of Harry, thy sovereign King.”

“But he’ll be surrounded with nobles so gay,
And how shall we tell him from them, sir, I pray?”
“Thou’lt easily ken him when once thou art there;
The King will be covered, his nobles all bare.”

He got up behind him and likewise his sack,
His budget of leather, and tools at his back;
They rode till they came to the merry greenwood,
His nobles came round him, bareheaded they stood.

The cobbler then seeing so many appear,
He slily did whisper the King in his ear:
Saying, “They’re all clothed so gloriously gay,
But which amongst them is the King, sir, I pray?”

The King did with hearty good laughter reply,
“By my soul! my good fellow, it’s thou or it’s I!
The rest are bareheaded, uncovered all round.”—
With his bag and his budget he fell to the ground,

Like one that was frightened quite out of his wits,
Then on his knees he instantly gets,
Beseeching for mercy; the King to him said,
“Thou art a good fellow, so be not afraid.

“Come, tell thy name?” “I am John of the Dale,
A cobbler of shoes and a lover of ale.”

“Rise up, Sir John, I will honour thee here,—
I make thee a knight of three thousand a year!”

This was a good thing for the cobbler indeed;
Then unto the court he was sent for with speed,
Where great store of pleasure and pastime was seen,
In the royal presence of King and of Queen.

Sir John of the Dale he has land, he has fee,
At the court of the king who so happy as he?
Yet still in his hall hangs the cobbler's old sack,
And the budget of tools which he bore at his back.

ANON.

GERNUTUS THE JEW OF VENICE

In Venice town not long ago
A cruel Jew did dwell,
Which lived all on usury,
As Italian writers tell.

Gernutus callèd was the Jew,
Which never thought to die,
Nor ever yet did any good
To them in streets that lie.

His life was like a barrow hog,
That liveth many a day,
Yet never once doth any good,
Until men will him slay.

Or like a filthy heap of dung,
That lieth in a hoard;
Which never can do any good,
Till it be spread abroad.

So fares it with the usurer,
He cannot sleep in rest
For fear the thief will him pursue,
To pluck him from his nest.

His heart doth think on many a wile
How to deceive the poor;
His mouth is almost full of muck,
Yet still he gapes for more.

Within that citie dwelt that time
A merchant of great fame,
Which being distressèd in his need,
Unto Gernutus came:

Desiring him to stand his friend
For twelvemonth and a day;
To lend to him a hundred crowns;
And he for it would pay.

Whatsoever he would demand of him,
And pledges he should have:
“No,” quoth the Jew, with flearing lookes,
“Sir, ask what you will have.

“No penny for the loan of it
For one year you shall pay;
You may do me as good a turn,
Before my dying day.

“But we will have a merry jest,
For to be talkèd long:
You shall make me a bond,” quoth he,
“That shall be large and strong.

“And this shall be the forfeiture,—
Of your own flesh a pound:
If you agree, make you the bond,
And here is a hundred crowns.”

“With right good will,” the merchant says,
And so the bond was made.
When twelve month and a day drew on,
That back it should be paid.

The merchant's ships were all at sea,
And money came not in ;
Which way to take, or what to do,
To think he doth begin.

And to Gernutus straight he comes,
With cap and bended knee;
And said to him, "Of curtesy,
I pray you bear with me.

"My day is come, and I have not
The money for to pay;
And little good the forfeiture
Will do you, I dare say."

"With all my heart," Gernutus said,
"Command it to your mind:
In things of bigger weight than this
You shall me ready find."

He goes his way; the day once past,
Gernutus doth not slack
To get a sergeant presently,
And clapt him on the back.

And laid him into prison strong,
And sued his bond withall;
And when the judgment day was come,
For judgment he did call.

The merchant's friends came thither fast,
With many a weeping eye,
For other means they could not find,
But he that day must die.

Some offered for his hundred crowns
Five hundred for to pay;
And some a thousand, two or three,
Yet still he did deny.

And at the last ten thousand crowns
They offered, him to save:
Gernutus said, "I will no gold,
My forfeit I will have.

"A pound of flesh is my demand,
And that shall be my hire."
Then said the judge, "Yet, good my friend,
Let me of you desire

"To take the flesh from such a place,
As yet you let him live:
Do so, and lo! an hundred crowns
To thee here will I give."

"No, no," quoth he, "no, judgment here;
For this it shall be tried;
For I will have my pound of flesh
From under his right side."

It grieved all the company
His cruelty to see,
For neither friend nor foe could help
But he must spoiled be.

The bloody Jew now ready is
With whetted blade in hand,
To spoil the blood of innocent,
By forfeit of his bond.

And as he was about to strike
In him the deadly blow,
"Stay," quoth the judge, "thy cruelty;
I charge thee to do so.

"Since needs thou wilt thy forfeit have,
Which is of flesh a pound,
See that thou shed no drop of blood,
Nor yet the man confound.

"For if thou do, like murderer
Thou here shalt hangèd be:
Likewise of flesh see that thou cut
No more than 'longs to thee.

"For if thou take either more or less,
To the value of a mite,
Thou shalt be hangèd presently,
As is both law and right."

Gernutus now waxed frantic mad,
And wots not what to say;
Quoth he at last, "Ten thousand crowns
I will that he shall pay;

"And so I grant to set him free."
The judge doth answer make;
"You shall not have a penny given;
Your forfeiture now take."

At the last he doth demand
But for to have his own;
"No," quoth the judge, "do as you list,
Thy judgment shall be shown.

“Either take your pound of flesh,” quoth he,
“Or cancel me your bond:”
“O cruel judge,” then quoth the Jew,
“That doth against me stand!”

And so with griping, grieved mind
He biddeth them fare-well:
Then all the people prais’d the Lord,
That ever this heard tell.

Good people, that do hear this song,
For truth I dare well say,
That many a wretch as ill as he
Doth live now at this day;

That seeketh nothing but the spoil
Of many a wealthy man,
And for to trap the innocent
Deviseth what he can.

From whom the Lord deliver me,
And every Christian too,
And send to them like sentence eke
That meaneth so to do.

ANON.

LORD RANDAL

"O, where have ye been, Lord Randal, my son?
O, where have ye been, my handsome young man?"
"I have been to the wood; mother, make my bed soon,
For I'm weary with hunting, and fain would lie
down."

"Where got ye your dinner, Lord Randal, my son?
Where got ye your dinner, my handsome young man?"
"I dined with my love; mother, make my bed soon,
For I'm weary with hunting, and fain would lie
down."

"What got ye to dinner, Lord Randal, my son?
What got ye to dinner, my handsome young man?"
"I got eels boiled in broth; mother, make my bed soon,
For I'm weary with hunting, and fain would lie
down."

"And where are your bloodhounds, Lord Randal, my
son?
And where are your bloodhounds, my handsome
young man?"
"O, they swell'd and they died; mother make my bed
soon,
For I'm weary with hunting, and fain would lie
down."

"O, I fear ye are poison'd, Lord Randal, my son!
O, I fear ye are poison'd, my handsome young man!"
"O, yes, I am poison'd! mother, make my bed soon,
For I'm sick at the heart, and I fain would lie down."

ANON.

A BALLAD FOR A BOY

When George the Third was reigning a hundred years
ago,
He ordered Captain Farmer to chase the foreign foe.
“You’re not afraid of shot,” said he, “you’re not
afraid of wreck,
So cruise about the west of France in the frigate called
Quebec.

“Quebec was once a Frenchman’s town, but twenty
years ago
King George the Second sent a man called General
Wolfe, you know,
To clamber up a precipice and look into Quebec,
As you’d look down a hatchway when standing on the
deck.

“If Wolfe could beat the Frenchmen then so you can
beat them now.
Before he got inside the town he died, I must allow.
But since the town was won for us it is a lucky name,
And you’ll remember Wolfe’s good work, and you
shall do the same.”

Then Farmer said, “I’ll try, sir,” and Farmer bowed
so low
That George could see his pigtail tied in a velvet bow.
George gave him his commission, and that it might
be safer,
Signed “King of Britain, King of France,” and sealed
it with a wafer.

Then proud was Captain Farmer in a frigate of his
own,
And grander on his quarter-deck than George upon
the throne.
He'd two guns in his cabin, and on the spar-deck ten,
And twenty on the gun-deck, and more than ten score
men.

And as a huntsman scours the brakes with sixteen
brace of dogs,
With two-and-thirty cannon the ship explored the
fogs.
From Cape la Hogue to Ushant, from Rocheforte to
Belleisle,
She hunted game till reef and mud were running on
her keel.

The fogs are dried, the frigate's side is bright with
melting tar,
The lad up in the foretop sees square white sails
afar ;
The east wind drives three square-sailed masts from
out the Breton bay,
And "Clear for action!" Farmer shouts, and reefers
yell "Hooray!"

The Frenchmen's captain had a name I wish I could
pronounce;
A Breton gentleman was he, and wholly free from
bounce,
One like those famous fellows who died by guillotine
For honour and the fleurs-de-lys, and Antoinette the
Queen.

The Catholic for Louis, the Protestant for George,
Each captain drew as bright a sword as saintly smiths
could forge;
And both were simple seamen, but both could under-
stand
How each was bound to win or die for flag and native
land.

The French ship was *la Surveillante*, which means the
watchful maid;
She folded up her head-dress and began to cannonade.
Her hull was clean, and ours was foul; we had to
spread more sail.
On canvas, stays, and topsail yards her bullets came
like hail.

Sore smitten were both captains, and many lads
beside,
And still to cut our rigging the foreign gunners
tried.
A sail-clad spar came flapping down athwart a blazing
gun;
We could not quench the rushing flame, and so the
Frenchman won.

Our quarter-deck was crowded, the waist was all
aglow;
Men hung upon the taffrail half-scorched, but loth to
go;
Our captain sat where once he stood, and would not
quit his chair.
He bade his comrades leap for life, and leave him
bleeding there.

The guns were hushed on either side, the Frenchmen
lowered boats,
They flung us planks and hencoops, and everything
that floats.
They risked their lives, good fellows! to bring their
rivals aid.
'Twas by the conflagration the peace was strangely
made.

La Surveillante was like a sieve; the victors had no rest.
They had to dodge the east wind to reach the port of
Brest,
And where the waves leapt lower, and the riddled ship
went slower,
In triumph, yet in funeral guise, came fisher-boats to
tow her.

They dealt with us as brethren, they mourned for
Farmer dead;
And as the wounded captives passed each Breton
bowed the head.
Then spoke the French Lieutenant, "'Twas fire that
won, not we.
You never struck your flag to us; you'll go to England
free."

'Twas the sixth day of October, seventeen hundred
seventy-nine,
A year when nations ventured against us to combine,
Quebec was burnt and Farmer slain, by us remembered
not;
But thanks be to the French book wherein they're not
forgot.

Now you, if you've to fight the French, my younster,
bear in mind
Those seamen of King Louis so chivalrous and kind;
Think of the Breton gentlemen who took our lads to
Brest,
And treat some rescued Breton as a comrade and a
guest.

WILLIAM CORY.

THE TOWN MOUSE AND THE COUNTRY
MOUSE

Once on a time, so runs the fable,
A country mouse, right hospitable,
Received a town mouse at his board,
Just as a farmer might a lord.
A frugal mouse, upon the whole,
Yet loved his friend, and had a soul,
Knew what was handsome, and could do't,
On just occasion, "coute que coute."
He brought him bacon, nothing lean,
Pudding, that might have pleased a Dean;
Cheese, such as men in Suffolk make,
But wish'd it Stilton for his sake;
Yet, to his guest though no ways sparing,
He ate himself the rind and paring.
Our courtier scarce could touch a bit,
But showed his breeding and his wit;
He did his best to seem to eat,
And cried, "I vow, you're mighty neat.
But oh, my friend, this savage scene!
For Heaven's sake, come and live with men:
Consider, mice, like men, must die,
Both small and great, both you and I;
Then spend your life in joy and sport,
(This doctrine, friend, I learnt at court)."
The veriest hermit in the nation,
May yield, we know, to strong temptation.

Away they came, through thick and thin,
To a tall house near Lincoln's Inn:
('Twas on the night of a debate,
When all their Lordships had sat late.)

Behold the place, where if a poet
Shined in description, he might show it;
Tell how the moon-beam trembling falls,
And tips with silver all the walls;
Palladian walls, Venetian doors,
Grotesco roofs, and stucco floors:
But let it, in a word, be said,
The moon was up, and men a-bed,
The napkins white, the carpet red:
The guest withdrawn had left the treat,
And down the mice sat, tête-a-tête.

Our courtier walks from dish to dish,
Tastes for his friend of fowl and fish;
Tells all their names, lays down the law,
"Que ca est bon! Ah, goutez, ca!
That jelly's rich, this Malmsey's healing,
Pray dip your whiskers and your tail in."
Was ever such a happy swain?
He stuffs, and swills, and stuffs again.
"I'm quite asham'd—'tis mighty rude
To eat so much—but all's so good.
I have a thousand thanks to give—
My Lord alone knows how to live."
No sooner said, than from the hall
Rush chaplain, butler, dogs and all:
"A rat, a rat! clap to the door"—
The cat comes bouncing on the floor.
O for the heart of Homer's mice,
Or gods to save them in a trice!

"An't please your honour," quoth the peasant,
"This same dessert is not so pleasant:
Give me again my hollow tree,
A crust of bread, and liberty!"

ALEXANDER POPE.

FAITHLESS SALLY BROWN

Young Ben he was a nice young man,
A Carpenter by trade;
And he fell in love with Sally Brown,
That was a lady's maid.

But as they fetch'd a walk one day,
They met a press-gang crew;
And Sally she did faint away,
Whilst Ben he was brought to.

The Boatswain swore with wicked words,
Enough to shock a saint,
That though she did seem in a fit,
'Twas nothing but a feint.

"Come, girl," said he, "hold up your head,
He'll be as good as me;
For when your swain is in our boat,
A boatswain he will be."

So when they'd made their game of her,
And taken off her elf,
She roused, and found she only was
A coming to herself.

“And is he gone, and is he gone?
She cried, and wept outright:
“Then I will to the water side,
And see him out of sight.”

A waterman came up to her,
“Now, young woman,” said he,
“If you weep on so, you will make
Eye-water in the sea.”

“Alas; they’ve taken my beau Ben
To sail with old Benbow;”
And her woe began to run afresh,
As if she’d said Gee woe!

Says he, “They’ve only taken him
To the Tender-ship, you see;”
“The Tender-ship,” cried Sally Brown,
“What a hard-ship that must be!

“Oh, would I were a mermaid now,
For then I’d follow him;
But oh!—I’m not a fish-woman,
And so I cannot swim.

“Alas! I was not born beneath
The Virgin and the Scales,
So I must curse my cruel stars,
And walk about in Wales.”

Now Ben had sailed to many a place
That’s underneath the world;
But in two years the ship came home,
And all her sails were furled.

But when he call'd on Sally Brown,
To see how she went on,
He found she'd got another Ben,
Whose Christian-name was John.

“O Sally Brown, O Sally Brown,
How could you serve me so?
I've met with many a breeze before,
But never such a blow:”

Then reading on his 'bacco box,
He heaved a bitter sigh,
And then began to eye his pipe,
And then to pipe his eye.

And then he tried to sing “All's Well,”
But could not though he tried;
His head was turn'd, and so he chew'd
His pigtail till he died.

His death, which happen'd in his berth,
At forty-odd betell:
They went and told the sexton, and
The sexton toll'd the bell.

ANON.

THE MILKMAID

A milkmaid, who poised a full pail on her head,
Thus mused on her prospects in life, it is said:
“Let me see—I should think that this milk will
procure
One hundred good eggs, or fourscore, to be sure.

“Well then,—stop, a bit,—it must not be forgotten,
Some of these may be broken, and some may be rotten;
But if twenty for accident should be detached,
It will leave me just sixty sound eggs to be hatched.

“Well, sixty sound eggs,—no, sound chickens, I mean:
Of these some may die,—we’ll suppose seventeen,
Seventeen, not so many, say ten at the most,
Which will leave fifty chicks to boil or to roast.

“But then there’s their barley: how much will they
need?
Why, they take but one grain at a time when they
feed,—
So that’s a mere trifle: now then, let us see,
At a fair market price how much money there’ll be.

“Six shillings a pair—five—four—three-and-six,
To prevent all mistakes, that low price I will fix:
Now what will that make? fifty chickens I said,—
Fifty times three-and-sixpence—I’ll ask *Brother Ned*.

"O but stop,—three-and-sixpence a *pair* I must sell
'em;

Well, a pair is a couple,—now then, let us tell 'em;
A couple in fifty will go (my poor brain!)
Why, just a score times, and five pair will remain.

"Twenty-five pairs of fowls,—now how tiresome it is
That I can't reckon up so much money as this!
Well, there's no use in trying, so let's give a guess,—
I'll say twenty pounds, *and it can't be no less.*

"Twenty pounds, I am certain, will buy me a cow,
Thirty geese and two turkeys,—eight pigs and a sow;
Now if these turn out well, at the end of the year,
I shall fill both my pockets with guineas, 'tis clear."

Forgetting her burden, when this she had said,
The maid superciliously tossed up her head;
When, alas for her prospects! her milk-pail descended,
And so all her schemes for the future were ended.

This moral, I think, may be safely attached,—
"Reckon not on your chickens before they are hatched."

JEFFERYS TAYLOR.

THE CHILDREN OF LIR

Out upon the sand-dunes thrive the coarse long
grasses,

Hérons standing knee-deep in the brackish pool,
Overhead the sunset fire and flame amasses,
And the moon to Eastward rises pale and cool;
Rose and green around her, silvery-gray and pearly,
Chequered with the black rooks flying home to
bed;

For, to wake at daybreak birds must couch them early,
And the day's a long one since the dawn was red.

On the chilly lakelet, in that pleasant gloaming,
See the sad swans sailing; they shall have no rest:
Never a voice to greet them save the bittern's
booming

Where the ghostly sallows sway against the West,
"Sister," said the grey swan, "Sister, I am weary,"
Turning to the white swan wet, despairing eyes;
"O," she saith, "my young ones," "O," she saith,
"my dearie,"

Casts her wings about him with a storm of cries.

Woe for Lir's sweet children whom their vile step-
mother

Glamoured with her witch-spells for a thousand
years;

Died their father raving—on his throne another—
Blind before the end came from his burning tears.

She—the fiends possess her, torture her for ever,
Gone is all the glory of the race of Lir;
Gone and long-forgotten like a dream of fever,
But the swans remember all the days that were.

Hugh, the black and white swan with the beauteous
feathers;

Fiachra, the black swan with the emerald breast;
Conn, the youngest, dearest, sheltered in all weathers,
Him his snow-white sister loves the tenderest.
These her mother gave her as she lay a-dying,
To her faithful keeping, faithful hath she been,
With her wings spread o'er them when the tempest's
crying,
And her songs so hopeful when the sky's serene.

Other swans have nests made 'mid the reeds and rushes,
Lined with downy feathers where the cygnets sleep
Dreaming, if a bird dreams, till the daylight blushes,
Then they sail out swiftly on the current deep,
With the proud swan-father, tall, and strong, and
stately,
And the mild swan-mother, grave with household
cares,
All well-born and comely, all rejoicing greatly;
Full of honest pleasure is a life like theirs.

But alas! for my swans, with the human nature,
Sick with human longings, starved with human
ties,
With their hearts all human, cramped in a bird's
stature,
And the human weeping in the bird's soft eyes.

Never shall my swans build nests in some green
river,
Never fly to southward in the autumn gray,
Rear no tender children, love no mates for ever,
Robbed alike of birds' joys and of man's are
they.

Babbled Conn the youngest, "Sister, I remember
At my father's palace how I went in silk,
Ate the juicy deer-flesh roasted from the ember,
Drank from golden goblets my child's draught of
milk.

Once I rode a-hunting, laughed to see the hurly,
Shouted at the ball-play, on the lake did row;
You had for your beauty gauds that shone so
rarely:"

"Peace," said Finnuola, "that was long ago."

"Sister," said Fiachra, "well do I remember,
How the flaming torches lit the banquet hall,
And the fire leaped skyward in the mid-December
And amid the rushes slept our staghounds tall.
By our father's right hand you sat shyly gazing,
Smiling half and sighing, with your eyes aglow,
As the bards sang loudly all your beauty praising;"

"Peace," saith Finnuola, "that was long ago."

"Sister," then saith Hugh, "most do I remember,
One I called my brother, you, earth's goodliest
man,
Strong as forest oaks are where the wild vines
clamber,
First at feast or hunting, in the battle's van.

Angus, you were handsome, wise and true and
tender,

Loved by every comrade, feared by every foe:
Low, low lies your beauty, all forgot your splendour;"

"Peace," said Finnuola, "that was long ago."

Dews are in the clear air, and the roselight paling,
Over sands and sedges shines the evening star,
And the moon's disk high in heaven is sailing,
Silvered all the spear-heads of the rushes are—
Housed warm are all things as the night grows
colder,

Water-fowl and sky-fowl dreamless in the nest,
But the swans go drifting, drooping wings and
shoulder,

Cleaving the still waters where the fishes rest.

KATHARINE TYNAN HINKSON.

bittern, a wading bird which belongs to the heron family.

Lir's children, had been turned into swans, and the story tells
how Finnuola, the eldest, cared for the others.

hurly, a ball game.

LORD ULLIN'S DAUGHTER

A chieftain, to the Highlands bound,
Cries, "Boatman, do not tarry!
And I'll give thee a silver pound,
To row us o'er the ferry."

"Now who be ye, would cross Lochgyle,
This dark and stormy water?"
"O, I'm the chief of Ulva's isle,
And this Lord Ullin's daughter.—

"And fast before her father's men
Three days we've fled together,
For should he find us in the glen,
My blood would stain the heather.

"His horsemen hard behind us ride;
Should they our steps discover,
Then who will cheer my bonny bride
When they have slain her lover?"

Out spoke the hardy Highland wight
"I'll go, my chief—I'm ready;
It is not for your silver bright,
But for your winsome lady:

"And by my word! the bonny bird
In danger shall not tarry;
So though the waves are raging white,
I'll row you o'er the ferry."—

By this the storm grew loud apace,
The water-wraith was shrieking;
And in the scowl of heaven each face
Grew dark as they were speaking.

But still as wilder blew the wind,
And as the night grew drearer,
Adown the glen rode armèd men,
Their tramping sounded nearer.—

“O haste thee, haste!” the lady cries,
“Though tempests round us gather;
I’ll meet the raging of the skies,
But not an angry father.”—

The boat has left a stormy land,
A stormy sea before her,—
When, oh! too strong for human hand,
The tempest gather’d o’er her.

And still they row’d amidst the roar
Of waters fast prevailing:
Lord Ullin reach’d that fatal shore,
His wrath was changed to wailing.—

For sore dismay’d, through storm and shade,
His child he did discover:—
One lovely hand she stretch’d for aid,
And one was round her lover.

“Come back! come back!” he cried in grief,
“Across this stormy water:
And I’ll forgive your Highland chief,
My daughter!—oh, my daughter!”—

'Twas vain: the loud waves lashed the shore,
Return or aid preventing;—
The waters wild went o'er his child,—
And he was left lamenting.

THOMAS CAMPBELL.

SIR GALAHAD

My good blade carves the casques of men,
My tough lance thrusteth sure,
My strength is as the strength of ten,
Because my heart is pure.
The shattering trumpet shrilleth high,
The hard brands shiver on the steel,
The splinter'd spear-shafts crack and fly,
The horse and rider reel:
They reel, they roll in clanging lists,
And when the tide of combat stands,
Perfume and flowers fall in showers,
That lightly rain from ladies' hands.
How sweet are looks that ladies bend
On whom their favours fall!
For them I battle till the end,
To save from shame and thrall!
But all my heart is drawn above,
My knees are bow'd in crypt and shrine:
I never felt the kiss of love,
Nor maiden's hand in mine.
More bounteous aspects on me beam,
Me mightier transports move and thrill;
So keep I fair thro' faith and prayer
A virgin heart in work and will.

When down the stormy crescent goes,
A light before me swims,
Between dark stems the forest glows,
I hear a noise of hymns:
Then by some secret shrine I ride;
I hear a voice, but none are there;
The stalls are void, the doors are wide,
The tapers burning fair.
Fair gleams the snowy altar-cloth,
The silver vessels sparkle clean,
The shrill bell rings, the censer swings,
And solemn chaunts resound between.

Sometimes on lonely mountain-meres
I find a magic bark;
I leap on board; no helmsman steers:
I float till all is dark.
A gentle sound, an awful light!
Three angels bear the Holy Grail:
With folded feet, in stoles of white,
On sleeping wings they sail.
Ah, blessed vision! blood of God!
My spirit beats her mortal bars,
As down dark tides the glory slides,
And star-like mingles with the stars.

When on my goodly charger borne
Thro' dreaming towns I go,
The cock crows ere the Christmas morn,
The streets are dumb with snow.
The tempest crackles on the leads,
And, ringing, springs from brand and mail;
But o'er the dark a glory spreads,
And gilds the driving hail.

I leave the plain, I climb the height;
No branchy thicket shelter yields;
But blessed forms in whistling storms
Fly o'er waste fens and windy fields.

A maiden knight—to me is given
Such hope, I know not fear;
I yearn to breathe the airs of heaven
That often meet me here.
I muse on joy that will not cease,
Pure spaces clothed in living beams,
Pure lilies of eternal peace,
Whose odours haunt my dreams;
And, stricken by an angel's hand,
This mortal armour that I wear,
This weight and size, this heart and eyes,
Are touch'd, are turn'd to finest air.

The clouds are broken in the sky,
And thro' the mountain-walls
A rolling organ-harmony
Swell up, and shakes and falls.
Then move the trees, the copses nod,
Wings flutter, voices hover clear:
"O just and faithful knight of God!
Ride on! the prize is near."

So pass I hostel, hall, and grange;
By bridge and ford, by park and pale,
All-armed I ride, whate'er betide,
Until I find the Holy Grail.

LORD TENNYSON.

BOLD ROBIN

Bold Robin has robed him in ghostly attire,
And forth he is gone like a holy friar,
Singing, hey down, ho down, down, derry down:
And of two grey friars he soon was aware,
Regaling themselves with dainty fare,
All on the fallen leaves so brown.

“Good morrow, good brothers,” said bold Robin Hood,
“And what make you in good greenwood?
Singing, hey down, ho down, down, derry down:
Now give me, I pray you, wine and food;
For none can I find in the good greenwood,
All on the fallen leaves so brown.”

“Good brother,” they said, “we would give you full fain,
But we have no more than enough for twain,
Singing hey down, ho down, down, derry down.”
“Then give me some money,” said bold Robin Hood,
“For none can I find in the good greenwood,
All on the fallen leaves so brown.”

“No money have we, good brother,” said they:
“Then,” said he, “we three for money will pray,
Singing, hey down, ho down, down, derry down:
And whatever shall come at the end of our prayer,
We three holy friars shall piously share,
All on the fallen leaves so brown.”

“We will not pray with thee, good brother, God wot;
For truly, good brother, thou pleases us not,
Singing, hey down, ho down, down, derry down.”
Then up they both started from Robin to run,
But down on their knees Robin pulled them each one,
All on the fallen leaves so brown.

The grey friars prayed with a doleful face,
But bold Robin prayed with a right merry grace,
Singing, hey down, ho down, down, derry down:
And when they had prayed, their portmanteau he
took,
And from it a hundred good angels he shook
All on the fallen leaves so brown.

“The saints,” said bold Robin, “have hearkened our
prayer,
And here’s a good angel apiece for your share;
If more you would have, you must win ere you wear,
Singing, hey down, ho down, down, derry down.”
Then he blew his good horn with a musical cheer,
And fifty green bowmen came trooping full near,
And away the grey friars they bounded like deer,
All on the fallen leaves so brown.

THOMAS LOVE PEACOCK.

ROSABELLE

O listen, listen, ladies gay!
No haughty feat of arms I tell;
Soft is the note, and sad the lay,
That mourns the lovely Rosabelle.

—“Moor, moor the barge, ye gallant crew!
And, gentle lady, deign to stay!
Rest thee in Castle Ravensheuch,
Nor tempt the stormy firth to-day.

“The blackening wave is edged with white:
To inch and rock the sea-mews fly;
The fishers have heard the water-Sprite,
Whose screams forebode that wreck is nigh.

“Last night the gifted Seer did view
A wet shroud swathed round lady gay;
Then stay thee, Fair, in Ravensheuch:
Why cross the gloomy firth to-day?”—

“’Tis not because Lord Lindesay’s heir
To-night at Roslin leads the ball,
But that my ladye-mother there
Sits lonely in her castle-hall.

“’Tis not because the ring they ride,
And Lindesay at the ring rides well,
But that my sire the wine will chide,
If ’tis not fill’d by Rosabelle.”—

O'er Roslin all that dreary night,
A wondrous blaze was seen to gleam;
'Twas broader than the watch-fire's light,
And redder than the bright moonbeam.

It glared on Roslin's castled rock,
It ruddied all the copse-wood glen;
'Twas seen from Dryden's groves of oak,
And seen from cavern'd Hawthornden.

Seem'd all on fire that chapel proud,
Where Roslin's chiefs uncoffin'd lie,
Each Baron, for a sable shroud,
Sheathed in his iron panoply.

Seem'd all on fire within, around,
Deep sacristy and altar's pale;
Shone every pillar foliage-bound,
And glimmer'd all the dead men's mail.

Blazed battlement and pinnet high,
Blazed every rose-carved buttress fair—
So still they blaze, when fate is nigh
The lordly line of high St. Clair.

There are twenty of Roslin's barons bold
Lie buried within that proud chapelle;
Each one the holy vault doth hold—
But the sea holds lovely Rosabelle!

And each St. Clair was buried there,
With candle, with book and with knell;
But the sea-caves rung, and the wild winds sung,
The dirge of lovely Rosabelle.

SIR WALTER SCOTT.

PAUL REVERE'S RIDE

Listen, my children, and you shall hear
Of the midnight ride of Paul Revere,
On the eighteenth of April, in seventy-five;
Hardly a man is now alive
Who remembers that famous day and year.

He said to his friend, "If the British march
By land or sea from the town to-night,
Hang a lantern aloft in the belfry-arch
Of the North Church tower as a signal light,—
One if by land, and two if by sea;
And I on the opposite shore will be,
Ready to ride and spread the alarm
Through every Middlesex village and farm,
For the country-folk to be up and to arm."

Then he said "Good-night!" and with muffled oar
Silently rowed to the Charlestown shore,
Just as the moon rose over the bay,
Where swinging wide at her moorings lay
The *Somerset*, British man-of-war;
A phantom ship, with each mast and spar
Across the moon like a prison bar,
And a huge black hulk, that was magnified
By its own reflection in the tide.

Meanwhile, his friend through alley and street
Wanders and watches with eager ears,

Till in the silence around him he hears
The muster of men at the barrack-door,
The sound of arms, and the tramp of feet,
And the measured tread of the grenadiers,
Marching down to their boats on the shore.
Then he climbed to the tower on the Old North
Church,

Up the wooden stairs with stealthy tread,
To the belfry-chamber overhead,
And startled the pigeons from their perch
On the sombre rafters, that round him made
Masses and moving shapes of shade,—
Up the trembling ladder, steep and tall,
To the highest window in the wall,
Where he paused to listen and look down
A moment on the roofs of the town
And the moonlight flowing over all.

Beneath, in the churchyard, lay the dead,
In their night encampment on the hill,
Wrapped in silence so deep and still
That he could hear, like a sentinel's tread,
The watchful night-wind, as it went
Creeping along from tent to tent,
And seeming to whisper "All is well!"
A moment only he feels the spell
Of the place and the hour, and the secret dread
Of the lonely belfry and the dead:
For suddenly all his thoughts are bent
On a shadowy something far away,
Where the river widens to meet the bay,—
A line of black that bends and floats
On the rising tide like a bridge of boats.

Meanwhile, impatient to mount and ride,
Booted and spurred, with a heavy stride
On the opposite shore walked Paul Revere.
Now he patted his horse's side,
Now gazed at the landscape far and near,
Then, impetuous, stamped the earth,
And turned and tightened his saddle-girth;
But mostly he watched with eager search
The belfry tower of the Old North Church,
As it rose above the graves on the hill,
Lonely and spectral and sombre and still.
And lo! as he looks, on the belfry's height
A glimmer, and then a gleam of light!
He springs to the saddle, the bridle he turns,
But lingers and gazes, till full on his sight
A second lamp in the belfry burns!
A hurry of hoofs in the village street,
A shape in the moonlight, a bulk in the dark,
And beneath, from the pebbles, in passing, a
 spark
Struck out by a steed flying fearless and fleet;
That was all! And yet, through the gloom and the
 light,
The fate of a nation was riding that night;
And the spark struck out by that steed in its
 flight
Kindled the land into flame with its heat.
He has left the village and mounted the steep,
And beneath him, tranquil and broad and deep,
Is the Mystic, meeting the ocean tides;
And under the alders that skirt its edge,
Now soft on the sand, now loud on the ledge,
Is heard the tramp of his steed as he rides.

It was *twelve* by the village clock
When he crossed the bridge into Midford town.
He heard the crowing of the cock
And the barking of the farmer's dog,
And felt the damp of the river fog,
That rises after the sun goes down.

It was *one* by the village clock
When he galloped into Lexington.
He saw the gilded weather-cock
Swim in the moonlight as he passed,
And the meeting-house windows blank and
 bare,
Gaze at him with a spectral glare,
As if they already stood aghast
At the bloody work they would look upon.

It was *two* by the village clock,
When he came to the bridge in Concord town.
He heard the bleating of the flock,
And the twitter of birds among the trees,
And felt the breath of the morning breeze
Blowing over the meadows brown.
And one was safe and asleep in his bed
Who at the bridge would be first to fall,
Who that day would be lying dead,
Pierced by a British musket-ball.

You know the rest. In the books you have read,
How the British regulars fired and fled,—
How the farmers gave them ball for ball,
From behind each fence and farmyard wall.
Chasing the red-coats down the lane,

Then crossing the fields to emerge again
Under the trees at the turn of the road,
And only pausing to fire and load.
So through the night rode Paul Revere;
And so through the night went his cry of alarm
To every Middlesex village and farm,—
A cry of defiance and not of fear,
A voice in the darkness, a knock at the door,
And a word that shall echo for evermore.
For, borne on the night-wind of the Past!
Through all our history, to the last,
In the hour of darkness and peril and need,
The people will waken and listen to hear
The hurrying hoof-beats of that steed,
And the midnight message of Paul Revere.

H. W. LONGFELLOW.

KING CANUTE

King Canute was weary-hearted; he had reigned for
years a score,
Battling, struggling, pushing, fighting, killing much
and robbing more;
And he thought upon his actions, walking by the
wild sea-shore.

“Leading on my fierce companions,” cried he, “over
storm and brine,
I have fought and I have conquered! Where was glory
like to mine?”
Loudly all the courtiers echoed: “Where is glory like
to thine?”

“What avail me all my kingdoms? Weary am I now
and old;
Those fair sons I have begotten long to see me dead
and cold;
Would I were, and quiet buried, underneath the silent
mould!

“Oh, remorse, the writhing serpent! at my bosom
tears and bites;
Horrid, horrid things I look on, though I put out all
the lights;
Ghosts of ghastly recollections troop about my
bed at nights.

"Cities burning, convents blazing, red with sacrilegious fires;

Mothers weeping, virgins screaming vainly for their slaughtered sires."—

"Such a tender conscience," cried a bishop, "every one admires.

"But for such unpleasant bygones, cease, my gracious lord, to search,

They're forgotten and forgiven by our Holy Mother Church;

Never, never does she leave her benefactors in the lurch.

"Look! the land is crowned with minters, which your grace's bounty raised;

Abbeys filled with holy men, where you and Heaven are daily praised:

You, my lord, to think of dying? on my conscience I'm amazed!"

"Nay, I feel," replied King Canute, "that my end is drawing near."

"Don't say so," exclaimed the courtiers (striving each to squeeze a tear).

"Sure your grace is strong and lusty, and may live this fifty year."

"Live these fifty years!" the bishop roared, with actions made to suit.

"Are you mad, my good lord keeper, thus to speak of King Canute!

Men have lived a *thousand* years, and sure his majesty will do 't.

“Adam, Enoch, Lamech, Cainan, Mahalaleel, Methuselah,
Lived nine hundred years apiece, and mayn’t the king
as well as they?”

“Fervently,” exclaimed the keeper, “fervently I trust
he may.”

“*He to die?*” resumed the bishop. “He a mortal like
to *us?*”

Death was not for him intended, though *communis
omnibus*:

Keeper, you are irreligious, for to talk and cavil thus.

“With his wondrous skill in healing ne’er a doctor
can compete,

Loathsome lepers, if he touch them, start up clean
upon their feet;

Surely he could raise the dead up, did his Highness
think it meet.

“Did not once the Jewish captain stay the sun upon
the hill,

And, the while he slew the foemen, bid the silver
moon stand still?

So, no doubt, could gracious Canute, if it were his
sacred will.”

“Might I stay the sun above us, good Sir Bishop?”
Canute cried;

“Could I bid the silver moon to pause upon her
heavenly ride?

If the moon obey my orders, sure I can command the
tide.

“Will the advancing waves obey me, bishop, if I
make the sign?”

Said the bishop, bowing lowly, “Land and sea, my
lord, are thine.”

Canute turned towards the ocean—“Back!” he said,
“thou foaming brine!

“From the sacred shore I stand on, I command thee
to retreat;

Venture not, thou stormy rebel, to approach thy
master’s seat:

Ocean, be thou still! I bid thee come not nearer to
my feet!”

But the sullen ocean answered with a louder, deeper
roar,

And the rapid waves drew nearer, falling sounding
on the shore;

Back the keeper and the bishop, back the king and
courtiers bore.

And he sternly bade them never more to kneel to
human clay,

But alone to praise and worship That which earth and
seas obey:

And his golden crown of empire never wore he from
that day.

W. M. THACKERAY (1811-1863).

THE WONDERFUL "ONE-HOSS-SHAY"

Have you heard of the wonderful one-hoss-shay,
That was built in such a logical way
It ran a hundred years to a day,
And then, of a sudden, it—ah, but stay,
I'll tell you what happened without delay,
Scaring the parson into fits,
Frightening people out of their wits.—
Have you ever heard of that, I say!

Seventeen hundred and fifty-five.
Georgius Secundus was then alive,—
Snuffy old drone from the German hive!
That was the year when Lisbon-town
Saw the earth open and gulp her down,
And Braddock's army was done so brown,
Left without a scalp of its crown.
It was on the terrible Earthquake-day
That the Deacon finished the one-hoss-shay.

Now in building of chaises, I tell you what,
There is always *somewhere* a weakest spot,—
In hub, tire, felloc, in spring or thill,
In panel, or crossbar, or floor, or sill,
In screw, bolt, thoroughbrace,—lurking still
Find it somewhere you must and will,—
Above or below, or within or without,—
And that's the reason, beyond a doubt,
A chaise *breaks down*, but doesn't *wear out*.

But the Deacon swore (as Deacons do,
With an, "I dew vum," or an "I tell *yeou*,")
He would build one shay to beat the taown
'n' the kcounty 'n' all the kentry raoun';
It should be so built that it *couldn'* break daown:
—"Fur," said the Deacon, "'t's mighty plain
Thut the weakes' place mus' stan' the strain;
'n' the way t' fix it, uz I maintain

Is only jest

T' make that place uz strong uz the rest."

So the Deacon inquired of the village folk
Where he could find the strongest oak,
That couldn't be split nor bent nor broke,—
That was for spokes and floor and sills;
He sent for lancewood to make the thills;
The crossbars were ash, from the straightest
trees;

The panels of white-wood, that cuts like cheese,
But lasts like iron for things like these;
The hubs of logs from the "Settler's ellum,"—
Last of its timber,—they couldn't sell 'em,
Never an axe had seen their chips,
And the wedges flew from between their lips,
Their blunt ends frizzled like celery-tips;
Step and prop-iron, bolt and screw,
Spring, tire, axle, and linchpin too,
Steel of the finest, bright and blue;
Thoroughbrace, bison-skin, thick and wide;
Boot, top, dasher, from tough old hide
Found in the pit when the tanner died.
That was the way he "put her through."—
"There!" said the Deacon, "naow she'll dew!"

Do! I tell you, I rather guess
She was a wonder, and nothing less!
Colts grew horses, beards turned grey,
Deacon and deaconess dropped away,
Children and grandchildren—where were they?
But there stood the stout old one-hoss-shay
As fresh as on Lisbon-earthquake-day!

EIGHTEEN HUNDRED; it came and found
The Deacon's Masterpiece strong and sound.
Eighteen hundred increased by ten;—
"Hahnsum kerridge" they called it then.
Eighteen hundred and twenty came;—
Running as usual; much the same.
Thirty and forty at last arrive,
And then come fifty, and FIFTY-FIVE.

Little of all we value here
Wakes on the morn of its hundredth year
Without both feeling and looking queer.
In fact, there's nothing that keeps its youth,
So far as I know, but a tree and truth.
(This is a moral that runs at large;
Take it.—You're welcome.—No extra charge.)

FIRST OF NOVEMBER,—the Earthquake-day.—
There are traces of age in the one-hoss-shay,
A general flavour of mild decay,
But nothing local, as one may say.
There couldn't be,—for the Deacon's art
Had made it so like in every part
That there wasn't a chance for one to start.
For the wheels were just as strong as the thills,

And the floor was just as strong as the sills,
And the panels just as strong as the floor,
And the whippetree neither less nor more,
And the back crossbar as strong as the fore,
And spring and axle and hub *encore*.
And yet, *as a whole*, it is past a doubt,
In another hour it will be *worn out*!

First of November, 'Fifty-five.!
This morning the parson takes a drive.
Now, small boys, get out of the way!
Here comes the wonderful one-hoss-shay,
Drawn by a rat-tailed, ewe-necked bay.
"Huddup!" said the parson.—Off went they.

The parson was working his Sunday's text,—
Had got to *fifthly*, and stopped perplexed
At what the—Moses—was coming next.
All at once the horse stood still,
Close by the meet'n'-house on the hill.
—First a shiver, and then a thrill,
Then something decidedly like a spill,—
And the parson was sitting upon a rock,
At half-past nine by the meet'n'-house clock,—
Just the hour of the Earthquake shock!
—What do you think the parson found,
When he got up and stared around?
The poor old chaise in a heap or mound,
As if it had been to the mill and ground!
You see, of course, if you're not a dunce,
How it went to pieces all at once,—
All at once and nothing first,—
Just as bubbles do when they burst.

End of the wonderful one-hoss-shay.
Logic is logic. That's all I say.

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES.

THE LADY OF SHALOTT

PART I

On either side the river lie
Long fields of barley and of rye,
That clothe the wold and meet the sky;
And thro' the field the road runs by
 To many-tower'd Camelot;
And up and down the people go,
Gazing where the lilies blow
Round an island there below,
 The island of Shalott.

Willows whiten, aspens quiver,
Little breezes dusk and shiver
Thro' the wave that runs for ever
By the island in the river
 Flowing down to Camelot.
Four grey walls, and four grey towers,
Overlook a space of flowers,
And the silent isle embowers
 The Lady of Shalott.

By the margin, willow-veil'd,
Slide the heavy barges trail'd
By slow horses; and unhail'd
The shallop flitteth silken-sail'd
 Skimming down to Camelot:

But who hath seen her wave her hand?
Or at the casement seen her stand?
Or is she known in all the land,
 The Lady of Shalott?

Only reapers, reaping early
In among the bearded barley,
Hear a song that echoes cheerly
From the river winding clearly,
 Down to tower'd Camelot:
And by the moon the reaper weary,
Piling sheaves in uplands airy,
Listening, whispers "'Tis the fairy
 Lady of Shalott."

PART II

There she weaves by night and day
A magic web with colours gay.
She has heard a whisper say,
A curse is on her if she stay
 To look down to Camelot.
She knows not what the curse may be,
And so she weaveth steadily,
And little other care hath she,
 The Lady of Shalott.

And moving thro' a mirror clear
That hangs before her all the year,
Shadows of the world appear.
There she sees the highway near
 Winding down to Camelot:

There the river eddy whirls,
And there the surly village-churls,
And the red cloaks of market girls,
 Pass onward from Shalott.

Sometimes a troop of damsels glad,
An abbot on an ambling pad,
Sometimes a curly shepherd-lad,
Or long-haired page in crimson clad,
 Goes by to tower'd Camelot;
And sometimes thro' the mirror blue
The knights come riding two and two:
She hath no loyal knight and true,
 The Lady of Shalott.

But in her web she still delights
To weave the mirror's magic sights,
For often thro' the silent nights
A funeral, with plumes and lights,
 And music, went to Camelot:
Or when the moon was overhead,
Came two young lovers lately wed;
"I am half-sick of shadows," said
 The Lady of Shalott.

PART III

A bow-shot from her bower-eaves,
He rode between the barley-sheaves,
The sun came dazzling thro' the leaves
And flamed upon the brazen greaves
 Of bold Sir Lancelot.

A red-cross knight for ever kneel'd
To a lady in his shield,
That sparkled on the yellow field,
Beside remote Shalott.

The gemmy bridle glitter'd free,
Like to some branch of stars we see
Hung in the golden Galaxy.
The bridle bells rang merrily
As he rode down to Camelot:
And from his blazon'd baldric slung
A mighty silver bugle hung,
And as he rode his armour rung,
Beside remote Shalott.

All in the blue unclouded weather
Thick-jewell'd shone the saddle-leather,
The helmet and the helmet-feather
Burn'd like one burning flame together,
As he rode down to Camelot.
As often thro' the purple night,
Below the starry clusters bright,
Some bearded metcor, trailing light,
Moves over still Shalott.

His broad clear brow in sunlight glow'd;
On burnish'd hooves his war-horse trode;
From underneath his helmet flow'd
His coal-black curls as on he rode,
As he rode down to Camelot.
From the bank and from the river
He flash'd into the crystal mirror,
"Tirra lirra," by the river
Sang Sir Lancelot.

She left the web, she left the loom,
She made three paces thro' the room,
She saw the water-lily bloom,
She saw the helmet and the plume,
 She look'd down to Camelot.
Out flew the web and floated wide;
The mirror crack'd from side to side;
"The curse is come upon me!" cried
 The Lady of Shalott.

PART IV

In the stormy east-wind straining,
The pale yellow woods were waning,
The broad stream in his banks complaining,
Heavily the low sky raining
 Over tower'd Camelot;
Down she came and found a boat
Beneath a willow left afloat,
And round about the prow she wrote
 The Lady of Shalott.

And down the river's dim expanse
Like some bold seer in a trance,
Seeing all his own mischance—
With a glassy countenance
 Did she look to Camelot.
And at the closing of the day
She loosed the chain, and down she lay;
The broad stream bore her far away,
 The Lady of Shalott.

Lying, robed in snowy white
That loosely flew to left and right—
The leaves upon her falling light—
Thro' the noises of the night

She floated down to Camelot:
And as the boat-head wound along
The willowy hills and fields among,
They heard her singing her last song,
The Lady of Shalott.

Heard a carol, mournful, holy,
Chanted loudly, chanted lowly,
Till her blood was frozen slowly,
And her eyes were darkened wholly,

Turn'd to tower'd Camelot;
For ere she reach'd upon the tide
The first house by the water-side,
Singing in her song she died,
The Lady of Shalott.

Under tower and balcony,
By garden-wall and gallery,
A gleaming shape she floated by,
Dead-pale between the houses high,
Silent into Camelot.

Out upon the wharfs they came,
Knight and burgher, lord and dame,
And round the prow they read her name,
The Lady of Shalott.

Who is this? and what is here?
And in the lighted palace near

Died the sound of royal cheer;
And they cross'd themselves for fear,
 All the knights at Camelot:
But Lancelot mused a little space;
He said, "She has a lovely face;
God in His mercy lend her grace,
 The Lady of Shalott."

LORD TENNYSON.

SINGING LEAVES

I

"What fairings will ye that I bring?"
Said the King to his daughters three;
"For I to Vanity Fair am bound,
Now say what shall they be?"

Then up and spake the eldest daughter,
That lady tall and grand:
"Oh, bring me pearls and diamonds great,
And gold rings for my hand."

Thereafter spake the second daughter,
That was both white and red;
"For me bring silks that will stand alone,
And a gold comb for my head."

Then came the turn of the least daughter,
That was whiter than thistle down,
And among the gold of her blithesome hair
Dim shone the golden crown.

“There came a bird this morning,
And sang ’neath my bower caves,
Till I dreamed, as his music made me,
‘Ask thou for the Singing Leaves.’ ”

Then the brow of the King swelled crimson
With a flush of angry scorn:
“Well have ye spoken, my two eldest,
And chosen as ye were born;

“But she, like a thing of peasant race,
That is happy binding the sheaves;”
Then he saw her dead mother in her face,
And said, “Thou shalt have thy leaves.”

11

He mounted and rode three days and nights,
Till he came to Vanity Fair,
And ’twas easy to buy the gems and the silk,
But no Singing Leaves were there.

Then deep in the greenwood rode he,
And asked of every tree,
“Oh, if you have a Singing Leaf,
I pray you give it me!”

But the trees all kept their counsel,
And never a word said they,
Only there sighed from the pine-tops
A music of seas far away.

Only the faltering aspen
Made a sound of growing rain,
That fell ever faster and faster,
Then faltered to silence again.

“Oh, where shall I find a little footpage
That would win both hose and shoon,
And will bring to me the Singing Leaves,
If they grow under the moon?”

Then lightly turned him Walter the page
By the stirrup as he ran:
“Now pledge you me the truesome word
Of a King and a gentleman,

“That you will give me the first, first thing
You meet at your castle-gate,
And the princess shall get the Singing Leaves,
Or mine be a traitor’s fate.”

The King’s head dropped upon his breast
A moment as it might be;
“’Twill be my dog,” he thought, and said,
“My faith I plight to thee.”

Then Walter took from next his heart
A packet small and thin,
“Now give you this to the Princess Anne,
The Singing Leaves are therein.”

As the King rode in at his castle-gate
A maiden to meet him ran,
And, “Welcome, father!” she laughed and cried
Together, the Princess Anne.

“Lo, here the Singing Leaves,” quoth he,
“And woe, but they cost me dear;”
She took the packet and the smile
Deepened down beneath the tear.

It deepened down till it reached her heart,
And then gushed up again,
And lighted her tears as the sudden sun
Transfigures the summer rain.

And the first Leaf, when it was opened,
Sang: “I am Walter the page,
And the songs I sing ’neath thy window
Are my only heritage.”

And the second Leaf sang: “But in the land
That is neither on earth nor sea,
My lute and I are lords of more
Than thrice this kingdom’s fee.”

And the third Leaf sang, “Be mine! Be mine!”
And ever it sang “Be mine!”
Then sweeter it sang, and ever sweeter,
And said, “I am thine, thine, thine!”

At the first Leaf she grew pale enough,
At the second she turned aside,
At the third ’twas as if a lily flushed
With a rose’s red heart’s tide.

“Good counsel gave the bird,” said she,
“I have my hope thrice o’er,
For they sing to my very heart,” she said,
“And it sings to them ever more.”

She brought to him her beauty and truth,
Birth and broad carldoms three,
And he made her Queen of the broader lands
He held of his lute in fee.

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

THE ARMADA

Attend, all ye who list to hear our noble England's
praise;
I tell of the thrice-famous deeds she wrought in
ancient days,
When that great fleet invincible against her bore in
vain
The richest spoils of Mexico, the stoutest hearts of
Spain.
It was about the lovely close of a warm summer day,
There came a gallant merchant-ship full sail to
Plymouth Bay;
Her crew had seen Castile's black fleet, beyond
Aurigny's Isle,
At earliest twilight, on the waves lie heaving many a
mile.
At sunrise she escaped their van, by God's especial
grace:
And the tall Pinta, till the noon, had held her close
in chase.
Forthwith a guard at every gun was placed along the
wall;
The beacon blazed upon the roof of Edgcumbe's
lofty hall;

Many a light fishing bark put out to pry along the
coast,

And with loose rein and bloody spur rode inland
many a post.

With his white hair unbonneted, the stout old sheriff
comes;

Behind him march the halberdiers; before him sound
the drums;

His yeomen round the market cross make clear an
ample space;

For there behoves him to set up the standard of Her
Grace.

As haughtily the trumpets peal and gaily dance the
bells,

And slow upon the labouring wind the royal blazon
swells,

Look how the Lion of the sea lifts up his ancient
crown,

And underneath his deadly paw treads the gay lilies
down.

So stalked he when he turned to flight, on that famed
Picard field,

Bohemia's plume, and Genoa's bow, and Cæsar's
eagle shield.

So glared he when at Agincourt in wrath he turned
to bay,

And crushed and torn beneath his claws the princely
hunters lay.

Ho! strike the flagstaff deep, Sir Knight: ho! scatter
flowers, fair maids:

Ho! gunners, fire a loud salute: ho! gallants, draw
your blades:

Thou sun, shine on her joyously; ye breezes, waft
her wide;
Our glorious SEMPER EADEM, the banner of our pride.
The freshening breeze of eve unfurled that banner's
massy fold;
The parting gleam of sunshine kissed that haughty
scroll of gold;
Night sank upon the dusky beach, and on the purple
sea,
Such night in England ne'er had been, nor e'er again
shall be.
From Eddystone to Berwick bounds, from Lynn to
Milford Bay,
That time of slumber was as bright and busy as the
day;
For swift to east and swift to west the ghastly war-
flame spread,
High on St. Michael's Mount it shone; it shone on
Beachy Head.
Far on the deep the Spaniards saw, along each
southern shire,
Cape beyond cape, in endless range, those twinkling
points of fire.
The fisher left his skiff to rock on Tamar's glittering
waves:
The rugged miners poured to war from Mendip's
sunless caves:
O'er Longleat's towers, o'er Cranbourne's oaks, the
fiery herald flew:
He roused the shepherds of Stonchenge, the rangers
of Beaulieu.
Right sharp and quick the bells all night rang out
from Bristol town,

And ere the day three hundred horse had met on
Clifton Down;
The sentinel on Whitehall gate looked forth into the
night,
And saw o'erhanging Richmond Hill the streak of
blood-red light;
Then bugle's note and cannon's roar the death-like
silence broke,
And with one start and with one cry, the royal city
woke.
At once on all her stately gates arose the answering
fires;
At once the wild alarum clashed from all her reeling
spires;
From all the batteries of the Tower pealed loud the
voice of fear;
And all the thousand masts of Thames sent back a
louder cheer;
And from the furthest wards was heard the rush of
hurrying feet,
And the broad streams of pikes and flags rushed down
each roaring street;
And broader still became the blaze, and louder still
the din,
As fast from every village round the horse came
spurring in:
And eastward straight from wild Blackheath the
warlike errand went,
And roused in many an ancient hall the gallant
squires of Kent.
Southward from Surrey's pleasant hills flew those
bright couriers forth;

High on bleak Hampstead's swarthy moor they started
for the north;
And on, and on, without a pause, untired they
bounded still:
All night from tower to tower they sprang: they
sprang from hill to hill:
Till the proud Peak unfurled the flag o'er Darwin's
rocky dales,
Till like volcanoes flared to heaven the stormy hills
of Wales.
Till twelve fair counties saw the blaze on Malvern's
lonely height,
Till streamed in crimson on the wind the Wrekin's
crest of light,
Till broad and fierce the star came forth on Ely's
stately fane,
And tower and hamlet rose in arms o'er all the
boundless plain;
Till Belvoir's lordly terraces the sign to Lincoln sent,
And Lincoln sped the message on o'er the wide vale
of Trent;
Till Skiddaw saw the fire that burned on Gaunt's
embattled pile,
And the red glare on Skiddaw roused the burghers
of Carlisle.

LORD MACAULAY.

THE THREE KINGS

Three Kings came riding from far away,
Melchior and Gaspar and Baltasar;
Three Wise Men out of the East were they,
And they travelled by night and they slept by day,
For their guide was a beautiful, wonderful star.

The star was so beautiful, large, and clear,
That all the other stars of the sky
Became a white mist in the atmosphere.
And by this they knew that the coming was near
Of the Prince foretold in the prophecy.

Three caskets they bore on their saddle-bows,
Three caskets of gold with golden keys;
Their robes were of crimson silk with rows
Of bells and pomegranates and furbelows,
Their turbans like blossoming almond-trees.

And so the Three Kings rode into the West,
Through the dusk of night over hills and dells,
And sometimes they nodded with beard on breast,
And sometimes talked, as they paused to rest,
With the people they met at the wayside wells.

"Of the child that is born," said Baltasar,
"Good people, I pray you, tell us the news;
For we in the East have seen his star,
And have ridden fast, and have ridden far,
To find and worship the King of the Jews."

And the people answered, "You ask in vain;
We know of no king but Herod the Great!"
They thought the Wise Men were men insane,
As they spurred their horses across the plain,
Like riders in haste who cannot wait.

And when they came to Jerusalem,
Herod the Great, who had heard this thing,
Sent for the Wise Men and questioned them;
And said, "Go down unto Bethlehem,
And bring me tidings of this new king."

So they rode away; and the star stood still,
The only one in the grey of morn;
Yes, it stopped, it stood still of its own free will,
Right over Bethlehem on the hill,
The city of David where Christ was born.

And the Three Kings rode through the gate and the
guard,
Through the silent street, till their horses
turned
And neighed as they entered the great inn-yard;
But the windows were closed, and the doors were
barred,
And only a light in the stable burned.

And cradled there in the scented hay,
In the air made sweet by the breath of kine
The little child in the manger lay,
The Child that would be King one day
Of a kingdom not human but divine.

His mother, Mary of Nazareth,
Sat watching beside his place of rest,
Watching the even flow of his breath,
For the joy of life and the terror of death
Were mingled together in her breast.

They laid their offerings at his feet:
The gold was their tribute to a King,
The frankincense, with its odour sweet,
Was for the Priest, the Paraclete,
The myrrh for the body's burying

And the mother wondered and bowed her head,
And sat as still as a statue of stone;
Her heart was troubled yet comforted,
Remembering what the Angel had said
Of an endless reign and of David's throne.

Then the Kings rode out of the city gate,
With a clatter of hoofs in proud array;
But they went not back to Herod the Great,
For they knew his malice and feared his hate,
And returned to their homes by another way.

H. W. LONGFELLOW.

THE FAKENHAM GHOST

The lawns were dry in Euston park
 (Here truth inspires my tale).
The lonely footpath, still and dark,
 Led over hill and dale.

Benighted was an ancient dame,
 And fearful haste she made
To join the Vale of Fakenham,
 And hail its willow shade.

Her footsteps knew no idle stops,
 But followed faster still;
And echoed to the darksome copse
 That whispered on the hill.

Where clamorous rooks, yet scarcely hushed,
 Bespoke a peopled shade;
And many a wing the foliage brushed
 And hovering circuits made.

The dappled herd of grazing deer,
 That sought the shades by day,
Now started from her path with fear,
 And gave the stranger way.

Darker it grew, and darker fears
 Came o'er the troubled mind;
When now, a short quick step she hears
 Come patting close behind.

She turned—it stopt—nought could she see
Upon the gloomy plain!
But, as she strove the Sprite to flee,
She heard the same again.

Now terror seized her quaking frame;
For, where the path was bare,
The trotting ghost kept on the same!
She muttered many a prayer.

Yet once again, amidst her fright,
She tried what sight could do;
When, through the cheating gloom of night,
A monster stood in view.

Regardless of whate'er she felt,
It followed down the plain!
She owned her sins, and down she knelt,
And said her prayers again.

Then on she sped, and hope grew strong,
The white park-gate in view;
Which pushing hard, so long it swung,
That ghost and all passed through.

Loud fell the gate against the post!
Her heart-strings like to crack:
For much she feared the grizzly ghost
Would leap upon her back.

Still on, pat, pat, the goblin went,
As it had done before—
Her strength and resolution spent,
She fainted at the door.

Out came her husband, much surprised;
Out came her daughter dear;
Good-natured souls! all unadvised
Of what they had to fear.

The candle's gleam pierced through the night
Some short space o'er the green;
And there the little trotting Sprite
Distinctly might be seen.

An ass's foal had lost its dam
Within the spacious park;
And, simple as the playful lamb,
Had followed in the dark.

No Goblin he; no imp of sin;
No crimes had e'er he known;
They took the shaggy stranger in,
And reared him as their own.

His little hoofs would rattle round
Upon the cottage floor;
The matron learned to love the sound
That frightened her before.

A favourite the Ghost became,
And 'twas his fate to thrive;
And long he lived, and spread his fame,
And kept the joke alive.

For many a laugh went through the vale,
And some conviction too;
Each thought some other goblin tale,
Perhaps was just as true.

ROBERT BLOOMFIELD.

BISHOP HATTO

The summer and autumn had been so wet
That in winter the corn was growing yet;
'Twas a piteous sight to see all around
The corn lie rotting on the ground.

Every day the starving poor
They crowded around Bishop Hatto's door,
For he had a plentiful last-year's store,
And all the neighbourhood could tell
His granaries were furnished well.

At last Bishop Hatto appointed a day
To quiet the poor without delay;
He bade them to his great barn repair,
And they should have food for the winter there.

Rejoiced such tidings good to hear,
The poor folk flock'd from far and near;
The great barn was full as it could hold
Of women and children, and young and old.

Then when he saw it could hold no more,
Bishop Hatto he made fast the door;
And whilst for mercy on Christ they call,
He set fire to the barn and burnt them all.

"I' faith, 'tis an excellent bonfire!" quoth he,
"And the country is greatly obliged to me,
For ridding it in these times forlorn,
Of rats that only consume the corn."

So then to his palace returnèd he,
And he sat down to supper merrily,
And he slept that night like an innocent man,
But Bishop Hatto never slept again.

In the morning as he enter'd the hall,
Where his picture hung against the wall,
A sweat like death all over him came,
For the rats had eaten it out of the frame.

As he look'd there came a man from his farm,
He had a countenance white with alarm;
"My Lord, I open'd your granaries this morn,
And the rats had eaten all your corn."

Another came running presently,
And pale he was as pale could be,
"Fly! my Lord Bishop, fly!" quoth he,
"Ten thousand rats are coming this way—
The Lord forgive you for yesterday!"

"I'll go to my tower in the Rhine," he replied,
"'Tis the safest place in Germany;
The walls are high, and the shores are steep,
And the tide is strong, and the water deep."

Bishop Hatto fearfully hasten'd away,
And he cross'd the Rhine without delay,
And reached his tower in the island and barr'd
All the gates secure and hard.

He laid him down and closed his eyes—
But soon a scream made him arise;

He started, and saw two eyes of flame
On his pillow from whence the screaming came.

He listen'd and look'd;—it was only the cat;
But the Bishop he grew more fearful for that,
For she sat screaming, mad with fear,
At the army of rats that were drawing near.

For they have swum over the river so deep,
And they have climbed the shores so steep,
And now by thousands up they crawl
To the holes and the windows in the wall.

Down on his knees the Bishop fell,
And faster and faster his beads did he tell,
As louder and louder drawing near
The saw of their teeth without he could hear.

And in at the windows, and in at the door,
And through the walls by thousands they pour,
And down from the ceiling, and up through the floor,
From the right and the left, from behind and before,
From within and without, from above and below,
And all at once to the Bishop they go.

They have whetted their teeth against the stones,
And now they pick the Bishop's bones;
They gnaw'd the flesh from every limb,
For they were sent to do judgment on him!

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

BORDER BALLAD

March, march, Ettrick and Teviotdale,
Why, my lads, dinna ye march forward in order?
March, march, Eskdale and Liddlesdale,
All the Blue Bonnets are bound for the Border.
Many a banner spread
Flutters above your head,
Many a crest that is famous in story,
Mount and make ready then,
Sons of the mountain glen,
Fight for the Queen and our old Scottish glory.

Come from the hills where your hirsels are grazing,
Come from the glen of the buck and the roe;
Come to the crag where the beacon is blazing,
Come with the buckler, the lance and the bow.
Trumpets are sounding,
War-steeds are bounding
Stand to your arms, and march in good order,
England shall many a day
Tell of the bloody fray
When the Blue Bonnets came over the Border.
SIR WALTER SCOTT.

THE LEAP OF ROUSHAN BEG

Mounted on Kyrat strong and fleet,
His chestnut steed with four white feet,
Roushan Beg, called Kurroglou,
Son of the road and bandit chief,
Seeking refuge and relief,
Up the mountain pathway flew.

Such was Kyrat's wondrous speed,
Never yet could any steed
Reach the dust-cloud in his course.
More than maiden, more than wife,
More than gold, and next to life
Roushan the Robber loved his horse.

In the land that lies beyond
Erzeroum and Trebizond,
Garden-girt his fortress stood;
Plundered khan, or caravan
Journeying north from Koordistan,
Gave him wealth and wine and food.

Seven hundred and fourscore
Men at arms his livery wore,
Did his bidding night and day.
Now, through regions all unknown,
He was wandering, lost, alone,
Seeking without guide his way.

Suddenly the pathway ends
Sheer the precipice descends,
Loud the torrent roars unseen
Thirty feet from side to side
Yawns the chasm; on air must ride
He who crosses this ravine.

Following close in his pursuit,
At the precipice's foot,
Reyhan the Arab, of Orfah,
Halted with his hundred men,
Shouting upward from the glen,
"La il Allah-Allah-la!"

Gently Roushan Beg caressed
Kyrat's forehead, neck and breast;
Kissed him upon both his eyes;
Sang to him in his wild way,
As upon the topmost spray
Sings a bird before it flies.

"Oh my Kyrat, O my steed,
Round and slender as a reed,
Carry me this peril through!
Satin housings shall be thine,
Shoes of gold, O Kyrat mine,
O thou soul of Kurroglou!

"Soft thy skin as silken skein,
Soft as woman's hair thy mane,
Tender are thine eyes and true;
All thy hoofs like ivory shine,
Polished bright; O, life of mine,
Leap, and rescue Kurroglou!"

Kyrat, then, the strong and fleet,
Drew together his four white feet,
 Paused a moment on the verge,
Measured with his eye the space,
And into the air's embrace
 Leaped as leaps the ocean surge.

As the ocean surge o'er silt and sand
Bears a swimmer safe to land,
 Kyrat safe his rider bore;
Rattling down the deep abyss
Fragments of the precipice
 Rolled like pebbles on a shore.

Roushan's tasselled cap of red
Trembled not upon his head,
 Careless sat he and upright;
Neither hand nor bridle shook,
Nor his head he turned to look,
 As he galloped out of sight.

Flash of harness in the air,
Seen a moment like a glare
 Of a sword drawn from its sheath;
Thus the phantom horseman passed,
And the shadow that he cast
 Leaped the cataract underneath.

Reyhan the Arab held his breath
While this vision of life and death
 Passed above him. "Allahu!"
Cried he. "In all Koordistan
Lives there not so brave a man
 As this Robber Kurroglou!"

II. W. LONGFELLOW.

OFF THE GROUND

Three jolly Farmers
Once bet a pound
Each dance the others would
Off the ground.
Out of their coats
They slipped right soon,
And neat and nicesome
Put each his shoon.
One—Two—Three!
And away they go,
Not too fast
And not too slow;
Out from the elm-tree's
Noonday shadow,
Into the sun
And across the meadow.
Past the schoolroom,
With knees well bent,
Finger a-flicking,
They dancing went.
Upsides and over,
And round and round,
They crossed click-clacking
The Parish bound;
By Tupman's meadow
They did their mile,
Tee-to-Tum
On a three-barred stile.
Then straight through Whipham

Downhill to Week,
Footing it lightsome
But not too quick,
Up fields to Watchet
And on through Wye,
Till seven fine churches
They'd seen skip by—
Seven fine churches,
And five old mills,
Farms in the valley,
And sheep on the hills;
Old Man's Acre
And Dead Man's Pool
All left Behind
As they danced through Wool.
And Wool gone by
Like tops that seem
To spin in sleep
They danced in dream:
Withy—Wellover—
Wassop—Wo—
Like an old clock
Their heels did go.
A league and a league
And a league they went,
And not one weary
And not one spent.
And lo, and behold!
Past Willow-cum-Leigh
Stretched with its waters
The great green sea.
Says Farmer Bates:
"I puffs and I blows,

What's under the water
Why, no man knows!"
Says Farmer Giles:
"My mind comes weak,
And a good man drowned
Is far to seek."
But Farmer Turvey,
On twirling toes,
Ups with his gaiters,
And in he goes:
Down where the mermaids
Pluck and play
On their twanging harps
In a sea-green day;
Down where the mermaids,
Finned and fair,
Sleek with their combs
Their yellow hair. . . .
Bates and Giles
On the shingle sat,
Gazing at Turvey's
Floating hat.
But never a ripple
Nor bubble told
Where he was supping
Off plates of gold.
Never an echo
Rilled through the sea
Of the feasting and dancing
And minstrelsy.
They called—called—called:
Came no reply:
Nought but the ripples'

Sandy sigh.
Then glum and silent
They sat instead
Vacantly brooding
On home and bed,
Till both together
Stood up and said:
"Us knows not, dreams not
Where you be,
Turvey, unless
In the deep blue sea;
But axcusing silver—
And it comes most willing—
Here's us two paying
Our forty shilling;
For it's sartin sure, Turvey,
Safe and sound
You danced us square, Turvey
Off the ground!"

WALTER DE LA MARE.

A BALLAD OF ST. CHRISTOPHER

There dwelt at the court of a good king
A giant huge and black,
He could take up Gedney Church
And carry it on his back;
A giant fierce and grim as he
No king had in his giantry.

This paynim wight was dull of wit,
But he held fast one thing,
That the strongest man in all the world
Should serve the strongest king,
A purpose firm he had in mind,
The mightiest king on earth to find.

A minstrel sang a song of the Devil,
The giant gasped to see
That the King made at the Devil's name
A sign with fingers three.
"Ho! ho!" said the giant, "I stay not here
To serve a king who goes in fear."

The giant found the great black Devil,
And did him homage true,
To be his faithful bondservant,
His bidding aye to do;
With his new master night and morn
He fired farmsteads and trampled corn.

They went on a lonely road one day,
Plotting great harm and loss;
"I must turn back," the Devil said sudden,
"For here I see a Cross."
"Ho! ho!" said the giant, "is here the sign
Of a king whose power is more than thine?"

"Gallows of God!" the Devil said,
And white with rage went he,
"He took the gallows for Himself,
That sure, belonged to me;
He took the gallows, He took the thief,
He stole my harvest sheaf by sheaf.

"He broke my gates, He harried my realm,
He freed my prisoned folk,
He crowned His Mother for Eve discrowned,
My kingdom went like smoke;
Where'er I go by night or day
That sign has power to bar my way.

"Great is my might, but against the clan
Of this King I have no charm;
If they touch water, if they touch wood,
I cannot work them harm;
I go a wanderer without rest
Where fingers three touch brow and breast!"

"God keep thee, Devil," the giant said,
"Thy riddle I cannot read,
But from thy company here and now
I must depart with speed;
I hold thee but as a beaten knave,
To find that mightiest King I crave."

The giant came to an old, old man
That worked among his bees,
He gathered wax for the altar lights
In white beneath green trees;
The sun shone through him and he, too, shone,
For he was the blessèd Apostle John.

He asked the old man of that king,
Whose bondslave he would be,
"Thro' wood," said St. John, "there is healing in
water,

His servants all are free,"
He christened him and straightway then
Told of the tasks of christened men.

"Some wear the stone with their bent knees,
Some holy pictures limn,
Some bear the news of Christ to lands
That have not heard of Him."

The giant said, "If I had the will
For this, I have no wit nor skill."

"To ford," St. John said, "yonder river,
Poor wayfarers essay,
And by the great swiftness of the stream
Many are swept away;
Who carries them over will do a thing
To pleasure greatly the Strong King."

The giant came to that wild water,
And on its brink did dwell,
He saved the lives of wayfarers
More than a man may tell;
And there it chanced one midnight wild
He heard the cry of a little child.

The child held a globe in his hand,
He begged to cross that night;
The giant set him on his shoulder
As a burden sweet and light;
Into the stream with a careless laugh
He stepped with a palm tree for a staff.

But the child grew heavier and his globe
Until they weighed like lead,
“*Deus meus et omnia*,
What child is this?” he said;
It seemed as the waves swelled and whirled
He felt the weight of all the world.
Sure, all the churches upon earth
He bore with tottering feet,
Rouen, Amiens, Bourges and Chartres,
Long Sutton, Gedney, Fleet;
So sweet, so terrible the load,
It was as though he carried God.

The bells of all those churches rang
When they had gained the shore,
He saw no child, but a great King
Of might unguessed before;
The King on Whom the world is stayed,
That is the Son of the pure Maid.

“I thank thee, Christopher, that thou
So well hast kept My rule;
Thou hast borne Me with Heaven My throne
And the earth My footstool.”
He felt strange joy within him stir
As the King called him “Christopher.”

On fair days and on market-days,
Where men to fiddles sing,
They tell of the strongest man on earth
Who served the mightiest King,
For that great King he served so well,
He loves the song and the fiddél.

RICHARD LAWSON GALES.

A BALLAD OF JOHN SILVER

We were schooner-rigged and rakish, with a long and
lissome hull,
And we flew the pretty colours of the cross-bones and
the skull;
We'd a big black Jolly Roger flapping grimly at the
fore,
And we sailed the Spanish Water in the happy days
of yore.

We'd a long brass gun amidships, like a well-conducted
ship,
We each had a brace of pistols and a cutlass at the
hip;
It's a point which tells against us, and a fact to be
deplored,
But we chased the goodly merchant-men and laid
their ships aboard.

Then the dead men fouled the scuppers and the
wounded filled the chains,
And the paint-work all was spatter-dashed with other
people's brains,

She was boarded, she was looted, she was scuttled till
she sank.

And the pale survivors left us by the medium of the
plank.

O! then it was (while standing by the taffrail on the
poop)

We could hear the drowning folk lament the absent
chicken-coop;

Then, having washed the blood away, we'd little else
to do

Than to dance a quiet hornpipe as the old salts taught
us to.

O! the fiddle on the fo'c's'le, and the slapping naked
soles,

And the genial "Down the middle, Jake, and curtesy
when she rolls!"

With the silver seas around us and the pale moon
overhead,

And the look-out not a-looking and his pipe-bowl
glowing red.

Ah! the pig-tailed, quidding pirates and the pretty
pranks we played,

All have since been put a stop to by the naughty
Board of Trade;

The schooners and the merry crews are laid away to
rest.

A little south the sunset in the Islands of the Blest.

JOHN MASEFIELD.

GILLESPIE

Riding at dawn, riding alone,
Gillespie left the town behind;
Before he turned by the Westward road
A horseman crossed him, staggering blind.

"The Devil's abroad in false Vellore,
The Devil that stabs by night," he said,
"Women and children, rank and file,
Dying and dead, dying and dead."

Without a word, without a groan,
Sudden and swift Gillespie turned,
The blood roared in his ears like fire,
Like fire the road beneath him burned.

He thundered back to Arcot gate,
He thundered up through Arcot town,
Before he thought a second thought
In the barrack yard he lighted down.

"Trumpeter, sound for the Light Dragoons,
Sound to saddle and spur," he said;
"He that is ready may ride with me,
And he that can may ride ahead."

Fierce and fain, fierce and fain,
Behind him went the troopers grim,
They rode as ride the Light Dragoons,
But never a man could ride with him.

Their rowels ripped their horses' sides,
Their hearts were red with a deeper goad,
But ever alone before them all
Gillespie rode, Gillespie rode.

Alone he came to false Vellore,
The walls were lined, the gates were barred;
Alone he walked where the bullets bit,
And called above to the Sergeant's Guard.

"Sergeant, Sergeant, over the gate,
Where are your officers all?" he said;
Heavily came the Sergeant's voice,
"There are two living and forty dead."

"A rope, a rope," Gillespie cried:
They bound their belts to serve his need;
There was not a rebel behind the wall
But laid his barrel and drew his bead.

There was not a rebel among them all
But pulled his trigger and cursed his aim,
For lightly swung and rightly swung
Over the gate Gillespie came.

He dressed the line, he led the charge,
They swept the wall like a stream in spate,
And roaring over the roar they heard
The galloper guns that burst the gate.

Fierce and fain, fierce and fain,
The troopers rode the reeking flight:
The very stones remember still
The end of them that stab by night.

They kept the tale a hundred years,
They'll keep the tale a hundred more:
Riding at dawn, riding alone,
Gillespie came to false Vellore.

HENRY NEWBOLT.

THE JOYS OF THE ROAD

Now the joys of the road are chiefly these:
A crimson touch on the hard-wood trees;

A vagrant's morning wide and blue,
In early fall, when the wind walks, too;

A shadowy highway cool and brown
Alluring up and enticing down:

From rippled water to dappled swamp,
From purple glory to scarlet pomp;

The outward eye, the quiet will,
And the striding heart from hill to hill;

The tempter apple over the fence;
The cobweb bloom on the yellow quince;

The palish asters along the wood—
A lyric touch of the solitude;

An open hand, an easy shoe,
And a hope to make the day go through—

Another to sleep with, and a third
To wake me up at the voice of a bird;

The resonant far-listening morn,
And the hoarse whisper of the corn;

The crickets mourning their comrades lost,
In the night's retreat from the gathering frost;

(Or is it their slogan, plaintive and shrill,
As they beat on their corselets, valiant still?)

A hunger fit for the kings of the sea,
And a loaf of bread for Dickon and me;

A thirst like that of the Thirsty sword,
And a jug of cider on the board;

An idle moon, a bubbling spring,
The sea in the pine-tops murmuring;

A scrap of gossip at the ferry;
A comrade neither glum nor merry,

Asking nothing, revealing naught,
But minting his words from a fund of thought,

A keeper of silence eloquent,
Needy, yet royally well content,

Of the mettled breed, yet abhorring strife,
And full of the mellow juice of life,

A taster of wine, with an eye for a maid,
Never too bold and never afraid,

Never heart-whole, never heart-sick,
(These are the things I worship in Dick),

No fidget and no reformer, just
A calm observer of ought and must,

A lover of books but a reader of men
No cynic and no charlatan,

Who never defers and never demands,
But, smiling, takes the world in his hands—

Seeing it good as when God first saw
And gave it the weight of His will for law.

And O the joy that is never won,
But follows and follows the journeying sun,

By marsh and tide, by meadow and stream,
A will-o'-the-wind, a light-o'-dream,

Delusion afar, delight anear,
From morrow to morrow, from year to year.

A jack-o'-lantern, a fairy fire,
A dare, a bliss, and a desire!

The racy smell of the forest loam,
When the stealthy, sad-heart leaves go home;

(O leaves, O leaves, I am one with you,
Of the mould and the sun and the wind and the dew!)

The broad gold wake of the afternoon;
The silent fleck of the cold new moon;

The sound of the hollow sea's release
From stormy tumult to starry peace;

With only another league to wend;
And two brown arms at the journey's end!

These are the joys of the open road—
For him who travels without a load.

BLISS CARMAN.

THE PAGEANT OF SEAMEN

The song of the sea-adventurers, that never were
known to fame,
The roving, boisterous mariners that builded our
England's name;
Foolhardy, reckless, undaunted,
Death they courted and taunted:
In the jaws of hell their flag they flaunted, answering
flame with flame.

An endless pageant of power and pride, they steer
from the long-ago
From quays that moulder beneath the tide, from cities
whose walls lie low:
Carrack and sloop and galley,
Out of the dark they rally,
As homing birds over hill and valley, back to the land
they know.

The crews of the Bristol Guinea-men, that traded to
Old Calabar,
Fading for years out of English ken in sweltering seas
afar;
The Danes and the Dutch they raced there,
The Brandenburgers they chased there,
They bid the Portingale cargoes waste there, under an
evil star.

Their ships came back from the Cameroons, ragged
and patched and old,

With decks roof-thatched from the Accra noons—but
down in their sultry hold,
Battened from wind and weather,
Were coral and ostrich feather,
Jasper and ivory heaped together, amber and dust of
gold.

The Greenland skippers that speared the whale at the
edge of the grinding floe,
Icicles fringing sheet and sail, and decks in a smother
of snow:
Men of Clyde and of Humber,
Cold in their Arctic slumber,
But their deeds of daring that none may number shall
live while the north winds blow.

The stately captains of barque and brig, in the days
of the good Queen Anne,
Under each powdered periwig was the brain of a sea-
bred man.
Was there work to be done? they did it:
Was there danger? they pressed amid it:
Wounded to death, with a smile they hid it, and
perished as sailors can.

The filibusters of Tudor years, that held the ocean in
fee,
The Buccaneers and the privateers, the outlawed sons
of the sea:
Terrible, swift, unsleeping,
Like bolts from the azure leaping,
Like birds of prey on their quarry sweeping, foraging
far and free.

The pigtailed bo's'ns of Anson and Cook, and the sea-faring men they led——

Who has counted in song or book the roll of those glorious dead?

On the desolate isles uncharted

Their valorous souls departed:

They fought—they fell—and in death, blithe-hearted, cheered as the foeman fled.

The men that talked with a Devon twang, as they hoisted the sails of Drake——

All through the West their rumour rang, the pride of the Dons to break.

Fierce to seize and to sunder

The golden argosies' plunder,

The New World's dread and the Old World's wonder, splendid for England's sake.

The coasting craft and the fishing craft, lugger and ketch and hoy,

With a duck-gun fore and a blunderbuss aft, served by a man and a boy;

Their tiny armaments flinging

On frigate and gun-boat—bringing

Prizes and prisoners home with singing, tired with a desperate joy.

Ruffed to the chin, or laced to the knee, or stripped to the waist for fight,

Herding the alien hordes of the sea to fields of defeat and flight,

Or lit by lightning's flashing,
Close-hauled through the hurricane thrashing,
With decks a-wash and with spars a-crashing, they
swoop on the reeling sight.

The sea-dogs sturdy, the sea-hawks bold, that were
never known to fame——

The grim adventurers, young and old, that builded
our England's name——

Over the waters of dreaming,
Their bows are rocking and gleaming,
To the sun unsetting their flag is streaming, answer-
ing flame with flame.

MAY BYRON.

ETIQUETTE

The *Ballyshannon* foundered off the coast of Cariboo,
And down in fathoms many, went the captain and his
crew;

Down went the owners—greedy men—whom hope
of gain allured,

Oh, dry the starting tear—for they were heavily
insured!

Beside the captain, and the mate, the owners and the
crew,

The passengers were also drowned, excepting only
two——

Young Peter Grey, who tasted teas for Baker, Croop
& Co.,

And Somers, who from Eastern shores, imported
indigo.

These passengers, by reason of their clinging to a mast,
Upon a desert island were eventually cast,

They hunted for their meals, as Alexander Selkirk
used,

But they couldn't chat together—they had not been
introduced.

For Peter Grey, and Somers, too, though certainly in
trade,

Were properly particular about the friends they made;
And somehow, thus they settled it, without a word
of mouth,

That Grey should take the northern half, while
Somers took the south.

On Peter's portion, oysters grew, a delicacy rare,
But oysters were a delicacy Peter couldn't bear.
On Somers' side was turtle, on the shingle lying
thick,
Which Somers couldn't eat, because it always made
him sick.

Grey gnashed his teeth with envy as he saw a mighty
store
Of turtle, unmolested, on his fellow-creature's shore.
The oysters at his feet, aside, impatiently he shoved,
For turtle, and his mother, were the only things he
loved.

And Somers sighed in sorrow, as he settled in the
south,
For the thought of Peter's oysters brought the water
to his mouth.
He longed to lay him down upon the shelly bed, and
stuff,
For he'd often eaten oysters, but he'd never had
enough.

How they wished an introduction to each other they
had had,
When on board the *Ballyshannon*, and it almost drove
them mad
To think how very friendly with each other they
might get,
If it wasn't for the arbitrary rule of etiquette.

One day when a-hunting for the *mus-ridiculus*,
Grey overheard his fellow-man soliloquizing thus:

"I wonder how the playmates of my youth are getting on,
McConnell, S. B. Walters, Paddy Byles, and Robinson?"

These simple words made Peter as delighted as could be,
Old chummies at the Charterhouse were Robinson and he.
He walked straight up to Somers, then he turned extremely red,
Hesitated, hemmed and hawed, then cleared his throat, and said:

"I beg your pardon—pray forgive me if I seem too bold—
But you have breathed a name I knew, familiarly, of old.
You spoke aloud of Robinson—I happened to be by—
You know him?" "Yes, extremely well." "Allow me—so do I."

It was enough—they felt they could more pleasantly get on,
For (oh! the magic of the fact) they each knew Robinson;
And Mr. Somers' turtle was at Peter's service quite,
And Mr. Somers punished Peter's oyster bed all right.
They soon became like brothers, from community of wrongs,
They wrote each other little odes, and sang each other songs;

They told each other anecdotes—disparaging their
wives—

On several occasions, too, they saved each others'
lives.

They felt quite melancholy when they parted for the
night,

And got up in the morning as soon as it was light.

Each other's pleasant company they reckoned so
upon,

And all because it happened they each knew Robinson.

They lived for many years on that inhospitable shore,
And day by day they learned to love each other more
and more.

At last, to their astonishment, on getting up
one day,

They saw a frigate anchored in the offing of the bay.

To Peter an idea occurred—"Suppose we cross the
main?

So good an opportunity may not occur again."

And Somers thought a moment, then ejaculated,
"Done!

I wonder how my business in the city's getting on?"

"But stay!" said Mr. Peter. "When in England, as you
know,

I earned a living tasting teas, for Baker, Croop & Co.
I may have been suspended—my employers think
me dead."

"Then come with me," said Somers, "and taste indigo
instead."

But all their plans were scattered in a moment, when
they found.

The vessel was a convict ship from Portland, outward
bound.

When a boat came out to fetch them, though they felt
it very kind,

To go on board they firmly but respectfully declined.

As both the happy settlers roared with laughter at
the joke,

They recognized a gentlemanly fellow pulling
stroke;

'Twas *Robinson*, a convict, in an unbecoming
frock,

Condemned to seven years for misappropriating
stock.

They laughed no more, for Somers thought he had
been very rash,

In knowing one whose friend had misappropriated
cash;

And Peter thought, a foolish tack he must have gone
upon,

In making the acquaintance of a friend of Robinson.

At first they didn't quarrel very openly, I've
heard;

They nodded when they met, and now and then
exchanged a word;

The *word* grew rare and rarer, still the nodding of the
head,

But when they meet each other *now*, they cut each
other dead.

To allocate the island they agreed by word of mouth,
And Peter takes the north again, and Somers takes
the south.

And Peter has the oysters, which he hates, in layers
thick,

And Somers has the turtle, and it *always makes him*
sick.

SIR W. S. GILBERT.

THE BALLAD OF HAMPSTEAD HEATH

From Heaven's Gate to Hampstead Heath
Young Bacchus and his crew
Came tumbling down, and o'er the town
Their bursting trumpets blew

The silver night was wildly bright,
And madly shone the Moon
To hear a song so clear and strong,
With such a lovely tune.

From London's houses, huts and flats,
Came busmen, snobs, and earls,
And ugly men in bowler hats
With charming little girls.

Sir Moses came with eyes of flame,
Judd, who is like a bloater,
'The brave Lord Mayor in coach and pair,
King Edward, in his motor.

Far in a rosy mist withdrawn
The God and all his crew,
Silenus pulled by nymphs, a faun,
A satyr drenched in dew,

Smiled as they wept those shining tears
Only Immortals know,
Whose feet are set among the stars,
Above the shifting snow.

And one spake out into the night,
Before they left for ever,
"Rejoice, rejoice!" and his great voice
Rolled like a splendid river.

He spake in Greek, which Britons speak
Seldom, and circumspectly;
But Mr. Judd, that man of mud,
Translated it correctly.

And when they heard that happy word,
Policemen leapt and ambled:
The busmen pranced, the maidens danced,
The men in bowlers gambolled.

A wistful Echo stayed behind
To join the mortal dances,
But Mr. Judd, with words unkind,
Rejected her advances,

And passing down through London Town
She stopped, for all was lonely.
Attracted by a big brass plate
Inscribed, FOR MEMBERS ONLY.

And so she went to Parliament,
But those ungainly men
Woke up from sleep, and turned about,
And fell asleep again.

JAMES ELROY FLECKER.

A RUNNABLE STAG

When the pods went pop on the broom, green broom,
And apples began to be golden-skin'd,
We harboured a stag in the Priory coomb,
And we feather'd his trail up-wind, up-wind,
We feather'd his trail up-wind—
A stag of warrant, a stag, a stag,
A runnable stag, a kingly crop,
Brow, bay and tray and three on top,
A stag, a runnable stag.

Then the huntsman's horn rang yap, yap, yap,
And 'Forwards' we heard the harbourer shout;
But 'twas only a brocket that broke a gap
In the beechen underwood, driven out,
From the underwood antler'd out
By warrant and might of the stag, the stag,
The runnable stag, whose lordly mind
Was bent on sleep, though beam'd and tined
He stood, a runnable stag.

So we tufted the covert till afternoon
With Tinkerman's Pup and Bell-of-the-North;
And hunters were sulky and hounds out of tune
Before we tufted the right stag forth,
Before we tufted him forth,

The stag of warrant, the wily stag,
The runnable stag with his kingly crop
Brow, bay and tray and three on top,
The royal and runnable stag.

It was Bell-of-the-North and Tinkerman's Pup
That stuck to the scent till the copse was drawn.
"Tally ho! Tally ho!" and the hunt was up,
The tufters whipp'd, and the pack laid on,
The resolute pack laid on,
And the stag of warrant away at last,
The runnable stag, the same, the same,
His hoofs on fire, his horns like flame,
A stag, a runnable stag.

"Let your gelding be: if you check or chide
He stumbles at once and you're out of the hunt;
For three hundred gentlemen, able to ride,
On hunters accustom'd to bear the brunt,
Accustom'd to bear the brunt,
Are after the runnable stag, the stag,
The runnable stag with his kingly crop,
Brow, bay and tray and three on top
The right, the runnable stag,"

By perilous paths in coomb and dell,
The heather, the rocks, and the river-bed,
The pace grew hot, for the scent lay well,
And a runnable stag goes right ahead,
The quarry went right ahead—
Ahead, ahead, and fast and far;
His antler'd crest, his cloven hoof,
Brow, bay and tray and three aloof,
The stag, the runnable stag.

For a matter of twenty miles and more
By the densest hedge and the highest wall,
Through herds of bullocks he baffled the lore
Of harbourer, huntsman, hounds and all,
Of harbourer, hounds and all—
The stag of warrant, the wily stag,
For twenty miles, and five and five,
He ran, and he never was caught alive,
This stag, this runnable stag.

When he turn'd at bay in the leafy gloom,
In the emerald gloom where the brook ran deep,
He heard in the distance the rollers boom,
And he saw in a vision of peaceful sleep
In a wonderful vision of sleep,
A stag of warrant, a stag, a stag,
A runnable stag in a jewell'd bed,
Under the sheltering ocean dead,
A stag, a runnable stag.

So a fateful hope lit up his eye,
And he open'd his nostrils wide again,
And he toss'd his branching antlers high
As he headed the hunt down the Charlock glen,
As he raced down the echoing glen—
For five miles more, the stag, the stag,
For twenty miles, and five and five,
Not to be caught now, dead or alive,
The stag, the runnable stag.

Three hundred gentlemen, able to ride,
Three hundred horses as gallant and free,
Beheld him escape on the evening tide,
Far out till he sank in the Severn Sea,

Till he sank in the depths of the sea—
The stag, the buoyant stag, the stag
That slept at last in a jewell'd bed
Under the sheltering ocean spread,
The stag, the runnable stag.

JOHN DAVIDSON.

THE BALLAD OF DICK TURPIN

The daylight moon looked quietly down
Through the gathering dusk on London town.

A smock-frockt yokel hobbled along
By Newgate, humming a country song.

Chewing a straw, he stood to stare
At the proclamation posted there:

*Three hundred guineas on Turpin's head,
Trap him alive or shoot him dead;
And a hundred more for his mate, Tom King.*

He crouched, like a tiger about to spring.

Then he looked up, and he looked down;
And, chuckling low, like a country clown,

Dick Turpin painfully hobbled away
In quest of his Inn—*The Load of Hay*.

.

Alone in her stall, his mare, Black Bess,
Lifted her head in mute distress;

For five strange men had entered the yard
And looked at her long, and looked at her hard.

They went out, muttering under their breath;
And then—the dusk grew still as death.

But the velvet ears of the listening mare
Lifted and twitched. *They were there—still there:*

Hidden and waiting; for whom? And why?
The clock struck four. A step drew nigh.

It was King! Tom King! Dick Turpin's mate.
The black mare whinneyed. Too late! Too late!

They rose like shadows out of the ground
And grappled him there, without a sound.

"Throttle him—quietly—choke him dead!
Or we lose the hawk for a jay," they said.

They wrestled and heaved, five men to one;
And a yokel entered the yard, alone;

A smock-frockt yokel, hobbling slow;
But a fight is physic, as all men know.

His age dropped off. He stood upright.
He leapt like a tiger into the fight.

Hand to hand, they fought in the dark;
For none could fire at a twisting mark,

Where he that shot at a foe might send
His pistol-ball through the skull of a friend.

But "*Shoot, Dick shoot!*" gasped out Tom King.
"*Shoot, or damn it, we both shall swing!*"

Shoot and chance it!" Dick leapt back.
He drew. He fired. At the pistol's crack,

The wrestlers whirled. They scattered apart,
And the bullet drilled through Tom King's heart.

Dick Turpin dropped his smoking gun.
They had trapped him now, five men to one.

A gun in each hand of the crouching five,
They could take Dick Turpin now, alive;

Take him and bind him and tell their tale
As a pot-house boast, when they drank their ale.

He whistled, soft as a bird might call;
And a head-rope snapped in his bird's dark stall.

He whistled, soft as a nightingale.
He heard the swish of her swinging tail.

There was no way out that the five could see,
To heaven or hell, but the Tyburn tree;

No door but death; and yet, once more,
He whistled, as though at a sweetheart's door.

The five men laughed at him, trapped alive;
And—the door crashed open behind the five!

Out of the stable, a wave of thunder,
Swept Black Bess, and the five went under.

He leapt to the saddle. A hoof-spurned stone
Flashed blue fire, and their prize was gone.

II

Away, through the ringing, cobbled street, and out
by the Northern Gate,
He rode that night, like a ghost in flight from the
dogs of his own fate.

By Crackskull Common, and Highgate Heath, he
heard the chase behind;
But he rode to forget—forget—forget—the hounds
of his own mind.

And cherry-black Bess on the Enfield Road flew light
as a bird to her goal;
But her Rider carried a heavier load, in his own
struggling soul.
He needed neither spur nor whip. He was borne on
a darker gale.
He rode like a hurricane-hunted ship, with the doom-
wind in her sail.

He rode for the one impossible thing; that, in the
morning light,
The towers of York might waken him—from London,
and last night.

He rode to prove himself another, and leave himself
behind;
And the hunted self was like a cloud; but the hunter
like the wind.

Neck and neck they rode together; that, in the day's
first gleam,
Each might prove that the other self was but a
mocking dream.

And the little sleeping villages, and the breathless
country-side.
Woke to the drum of the racing hoofs; but missed
that ghostly ride.

They did not hear, they did not see, as the drumming
hoofs drew nigh,
The dark magnificent thief in the night that rode
so subtly by.

They woke. They rushed to the wayside door. They
saw what the midnight showed,—
A mare that came like a crested wave along the
Great North Road;

A flying spark in the formless dark, a flash from the
hoof-spurned stone,
And the lifted face of a Man, that took the star-light,
and was gone.

They heard the shout of the pounding chase, three
hundred yards away.

There were fourteen men in a steam of sweat and a
plaster of Midland clay.

The star-light struck their pistol-butts, as they
passed in a clattering crowd.

*But the hunting wraith was away like the wind at the
heels of the hunted cloud.*

He rode by the walls of Nottingham; and, over him
as he went,

Like ghosts across the Great North Road, the boughs
of Sherwood went.

By Bawtry all the chase but one had dropt a league
behind,

Yet that one Rider hunted him, invisibly, as the
wind.

And northward, like a blacker night, he saw the
moors up-loom.

And Don and Derwent sang to him, like memory in
the gloom,

And northward, northward as he rode and sweeter
than a prayer

The voices of those hidden streams, the Trent and
Ouse and Aire;

Streams that could never slake his thirst. He heard
them as they flowed.

But one dumb Shadow hunted him along the Great
North Road.

Till now, at dawn, the towers of York rose on the
reddening sky.

And Bess went down between his knees, like a break-
ing wave, to die.

He lay beside her in the ditch. He kissed her lovely
head;

And a Shadow passed him like the wind, and left
him with his dead.

He saw, but not as one that wakes, the City that he
sought;

He had escaped from London town, but not from
his own thought.

He strode up to the Mickle-gate with none to say
him nay;

And there he met his Other Self, in the stranger light
of day.

He strode up to the dreadful Thing that in the gate-
way stood;

And it stretched out a ghostly hand that the dawn
had stained with blood.

It stood, as in the gates of hell, with none to hear
or see.

"*Welcome!*" it said, "*Thou'st ridden well; and outstript
all but me.*"

SAM'S THREE WISHIES;
OR LIFE'S LITTLE WHIRLIGIG

"I'm thinking and thinking," said old Sam Shore,
" 'Twere somebody *knocking* I heard at the door."

From the clock popped the cuckoo and cuckooed out
eight,

As there in his chair he wondering sate. . . .

"There's no one I knows on would come so late,

A-clicking the latch of an empty house

With nobbut inside 'un but me and a mouse. . . .

Maybe a-waking in sleep I be,

And 'twere out of a dream came that tapping
to me."

At length he cautiously rose, and went,

And with thumb upon latch awhile listening bent,

Then slowly drew open the door. And behold!

There stood a Fairy!—all green and gold,

Mantled up warm against dark and cold,

And smiling up into his candle shine,

Lips like wax, and cheeks like wine,

As saucy and winsome a thing to see

As are linden buds on a linden tree.

Stock-still in the doorway stood simple Sam,

A-ducking his head, with "Good-e'en to 'ee, Ma'am."

Dame Fairy she nods, and cries clear and sweet,

" 'Tis a *very* good-e'en, sir, when such folks meet.

I know thee, Sam, though thou wist not of me,

And I'm come in late gloaming to speak with thee;

Though my eyes do dazzle at glint of your rush,
All under this pretty green fuchsia bush."

Sam ducked once more, smiling simple and slow.
Like the warbling of birds her words did flow,
And she laughed, very merry, to see how true
Shone the old man's kindness his courtesy through.
And she nodded her head, and the stars on high
Sparkled down on her smallness from out of the sky.
"A friend is a friend, Sam, and wonderful pleasant,
And I'm come for old sake's sake to bring thee a
present.

Three wishes, three wishes are thine, Sam Shore,
Just three wishes—and wish no more,
All because, ruby-ripe to see,
The pixy-pears burn in yon hawthorn tree,
And your old milch cow, wheresoever she goes
Never crops over the fairy-knowes.
Ay, Sam, thou art old and thy house is lone,
But there's potencies round thee, and here is one!"

Poor Sam, he stared: and the stars o'erhead
A shimmering light on the elm-tops shed.
Like rilling of water her voice rang sweet,
And the night-wind sighed at the sound of it.
He frowned—glanced back at the empty grate,
And shook very slowly his grey old pate:
"Three wishes, my dear! Why, I scarcely knows
Which be my crany and which my toes!
But I thank 'ee, Ma'am, kindly, and this I'd say,
That the night of your passing is Michaelmas Day;
And if it were company come on a sudden,
Why, I'd ax for a fat goose to fry in the oven!"

And lo, and forsooth! as the words he was uttering,
A rich puff of air set his candle a-guttering,
And there rose in the kitchen a sizzling and sputtering,
With a crackling of sparks and of flames a great
fluttering,

And—of which there could not be two opinions—
A smoking-hot savour of sage and—onions.
Beam, wall and flagstones the kitchen was lit,
Every dark corner and cranny of it
With the blaze from the hearthstone. Copper and
brass

Winked back the winking of platter and glass.
And a wonderful squeaking of mice went up
At the smell of a Michaelmas supper to sup—
Unctuous odours that wreathed and swirled
Where'er frisked a whisker or mouse-tail twirled,
While out of the chimney up into the night
That ne'er-to-be-snuffed-too-much smoke took flight.
"That's one," says the Fairy, finger on thumb,
"So now, Mister Sam, there's but two to come!"

She leaned her head sidelong; she lifted her chin,
With a twinkling of eye from the radiance within.
Poor Sam stood astounded; he says, says he,
"I *wish* my old Mother was back with me,
For if there was one thing she couldn't refuse
'Twas a sweet thick slice from the breast of a goose."
But his cheek grew stiff and his eyes stared bright,
For there, on her stick, pushing out of the night,
Tap-tapping along, herself and no other,
Came who but the shape of his dear old Mother!
Straight into the kitchen she hastened and went,
Her breath coming quick as if all but spent,

"Why, Sam," says she, "the bird be turning,
For my nose tells I that the skin's a-burning!"
And down at the oven the ghost of her sat
And basted the goose with the boiling fat.

"Oho!" cries the Fairy, sweet and small,
"Another wish gone will leave nothing at all."
And Sam sighs, "Bless 'ee, Ma'am, keep the other,
There's nowt that I want now I have my
Mother."

But the Fairy laughs softly, and says, says she,
"There's one wish left, Sam, I promised 'ee three.
Hasten your wits, the hour creeps on,
There's calling afield and I'm soon to be gone.
Soon as haps midnight the cocks will crow
And me to the gathering and feasting must go."

Sam gazed at his Mother—withered and wan,
The rose in her cheek, her bright hair, gone,
And her poor old back bent double with years—
And he scarce could speak for the salt, salt tears.
"Well, well," he says, "I'm unspeakable glad:
But—it bain't quite the same as when I was a lad.
There's joy and there's joy, Ma'am, but to tell 'ee the
truth

There's none can compare with the joy of one's
youth.

And if it was possible, how could I choose
But be back in boy's breeches to eat the goose;
And all the old things—and my Mother the most,
To shine again real as my own gatepost.
What wouldn't I give, too, to see again wag
The dumpity tail of my old dog, Shag!

Your kindness, Ma'am, but all wishing was vain
Unless us can both be young again."

A shrill, faint laughter from nowhere came . . .
Empty the dark in the candle-flame . . .

And there stood our Sam, about four feet high,
Snub nose, shock hair, and round blue eye.
Breeches and braces and coat of him too,
Shirt on his back, and each clodhopping shoe
Had shrunk to a nicety—button and hem—
To fit the small Sammie tucked up into them.

There was his Mother, too; smooth, clear cheek,
Lips as smooth as a blackbird's beak,
Pretty arched eyebrows, the daintiest nose—
While the smoke of the baking deliciously rose.
"Come, Sammie," she cries, "your old Mammikin's
joy,
Climb up on your stool, supper's ready, my boy,
Bring in the candle, and shut out the night;
There's goose, baked taties and cabbage to bite.
Why, bless the wee lamb, he's all shiver and shake,
And you'd think from the look of him scarcely
awake!
If 'ee glour wi' those eyes, Sam, so dark and
round,
The elves will away with 'ee, I'll be bound!"
So Sam and his Mother by wishes three
Were made just as happy as happy can be.
And there—with a bumpity tail to wag—
Sat laughing, with tongue out, their old dog, Shag.
To clatter of platter, bones, giblets and juice,
Between them they ate up the whole of the goose.

But time is a river for ever in flow,
The weeks went by as the weeks must go.
Soon fifty-two to a year did grow.
The long years passed, one after another,
Making older and older our Sam and his Mother;
And, alas and alack, with nine of them gone,
Poor Shag lay asleep again under a stone.
And a sorrowful dread would sometimes creep
Into Sam's dreams, as he lay asleep,
That his Mother was lost, and away he'd fare,
Calling her, calling her, everywhere,
In dark, in rain, by roads unknown,
Under echoing hills, and alone, alone.
What bliss in the morning to wake and see
The sun shining green in the linden tree,
And out of that dream's dark shadowiness
To slip in on his Mother and give her a kiss.
Then go whistling off in the dew to hear
The thrushes all mocking him, sweet and clear.

Still, moon after moon from heaven above
Shone on Mother and son, and made light of love.
Her roses faded, her pretty brown hair
Had sorrowful grey in it everywhere.
And at last she died, and was laid to rest,
Her tired hands crossed on her shrunken breast.
And Sam, now lonely, lived on and on
Till most of his workaday life seemed gone.

Yet spring came again with its green and blue,
And presently summer's wild roses too,
Pinks, Sweet William, and sops-in-wine,
Blackberry, lavender, eglantine.

And when these had blossomed and gone their way,
'Twas apples, and daisies, and Michaelmas Day—
Yes, spider-webs, dew, and haws in the may,
And seraphs singing in Michaelmas Day.
Sam worked all morning and *couldn't* get rest
For a kind of a feeling of grief in his breast.
And yet, not grief, but something more
Like the thought that what happens has happened
before.

He fed the chickens, he fed the sow,
On a three-legged stool sat down to the cow,
With a pail 'twixt his legs in the green in the
meadow,
Under the elm trees' lengthening shadow;
And woke at last with a smile and a sigh
To find he had milked his poor Jingo dry.

As dusk set in, even the birds did seem
To be calling and calling from out of a dream.
He chopped up kindling, shut up his shed,
In a bucket of well-water soused his head
To freshen his eyes up a little and make
The drowsy old wits of him wider awake.
As neat as a womanless creature is able
He swept up his hearthstone and laid the table.
And then o'er his platter and mug, if you please,
Sate gloomily gooming at loaf and cheese—
Gooming and gooming as if the mere sight
Of his victuals could satisfy appetite!
And the longer and longer he looked at them
The slimmer slimmed upward his candle flame,
Blue in the air. And when squeaked a mouse
'Twas loud as a trump in the hush of the house,

Then, sudden, a soft little wind puffed by,
'Twixt the thick-thatched roof and the star-sown sky;
And died. And then
That deep, dead, wonderful silence again.

Then—soft as a rattle a-counting her seeds
In the midst of a tangle of withered-up weeds—
Came a faint, faint knocking, a rustle like silk,
And a breath at the keyhole as soft as milk—
Still as the flit of a moth. And then . . .
That infinitesimal knocking again.

Sam lifted his chin from his fists. He listened.
His wandering eyes in the candle glistened.
Then slowly, slowly, rolled round by degrees—
And there sat a mouse on the top of his cheese.
He stared at this Midget, and it at him,
Over the edge of his mug's round rim,
And—as if it were Christian—he says, "Did 'ee hear
A faint little tap-tap-tap-tapping, my dear?
You was at supper and me in a maze,
'Tis dark for a caller in these lone days,
There's nowt in the larder. We're both of us old.
And all of my loved ones sleep under the mould,
And yet—and yet—as I've told 'ee before . . ."

*But if Sam's story you'd read to the end,
Turn back to page one, and press onward, dear friend;
Yes, if you would stave the last note of this song,
Turn back to page primus, and warble along!
For all sober records of life (come to write 'em),
Are bound to continue—well—ad infinitum!*

WALTER DE LA MARE.

FUZZY-WUZZY

(Soudan Expeditionary Force.)

We've fought with many men acrost the seas,
An' some of 'em was brave an' some was not:
The Paythan an' the Zulu an' Burmese;
But the Fuzzy was the finest o' the lot.
We never got a ha'porth's change of 'im:
'E squatted in the scrub an' 'ocked our 'orses,
'E cut our sentries up at Suakim,
An' 'e played the cat an' banjo with our forces.
So 'ere's to you, Fuzzy-Wuzzy, at your 'ome in the
Soudan;
You're a pore benighted 'eathen but a first-class
fightin' man;
We gives you your certificate, an' if you want it
signed
We'll come an' 'ave a romp with you whenever you're
inclined.

We took our chanst among the Kyber 'ills,
The Boers knocked us silly at a mile,
The Burman give us Irriwaddy chills,
An' a Zulu *impi* dished us up in style:
But all we ever got from such as they
Was pop to what the Fuzzy made us swaller;
We 'eld our bloomin' own, the papers say,
But man for man the Fuzzy knocked us 'oller.
Then 'ere's to you, Fuzzy-Wuzzy, an' the missis and
the kid;

Our orders was to break you, an' of course we went
an' did.

We sloshed you with Martinis, an' it wasn't 'ardly
fair;

But for all the odds agin' you, Fuzzy-Wuz, you
broke the square.

'E 'asn't got no papers of 'is own,

'E 'asn't got no medals nor rewards,

So we must certify the skill 'e's shown

In usin' of 'is long two-'anded swords:

When 'e's 'oppin' in an' out among the bush

With 'is coffin-'eaded shield an' shovel-spear,

An 'appy day with Fuzzy on the rush

Will last an 'ealthy Tommy for a year.

So 'ere's to you, Fuzzy-Wuzzy, an' your friends
which are no more,

If we 'adn't lost some messmates we would 'elp you
to deplore;

But give an' take's the gospel, an' we'll call the bargain
fair,

For if you 'ave lost more than us, you crumpled up the
square!

'E rushes at the smoke when we let drive,

An', before we know, 'e's 'ackin' at our 'ead;

'E's all 'ot sand an' ginger when alive,

An' 'e's generally shammin' when 'e's dead.

'E's a daisy, 'e's a ducky, 'e's a lamb!

'E's a inja-rubber idiot on the spree,

'E's the on'y thing that doesn't give a damn

For a Regiment o' British Infantee!

So 'ere's to you, Fuzzy-Wuzzy, at your 'ome in the
Soudan;
You're a pore benighted 'eathen but a first-class
fightin' man;
An' 'ere's to you, Fuzzy-Wuzzy, with your 'ayrick 'ead
of 'air—
You big black boundin' beggar—for you broke a
British square!

RUDYARD KIPLING.

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